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# THE BOOKMAN

## FEBRUARY 1930

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POETRY AND PROPAGANDA
*by T. S. Eliot*

A NEW EDWIN DROOD THEORY
*by Howard Duffield*

AUTHORS AT WORK
*by Dale Warren*

THE NEGRO AS WRITER
*by John Chamberlain*

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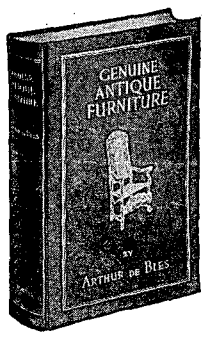


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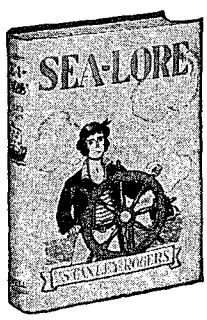


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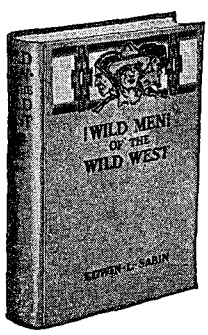


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FEBRUARY, 1930 THE BOOKMAN VOL. LXX; NO. 6

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*Since Dickens died, leaving "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" unfinished, speculation about his intention has never ceased. Dr. Duffield, who is president of the New York branch of the Dickens Fellowship, contributes an extremely ingenious theory of Drood's murder and murderer.*

ON THE WORKING HABITS OF AUTHORS — DALE WARREN — 589

*Mr. Warren's experience in publishing has given him opportunity to investigate the amazingly diverse ways of authors at their work.*

POETRY AND PROPAGANDA — T. S. ELIOT — 595

*Disagreeing with a statement of Professor A. N. Whitehead's, in his book, "Science and the Modern World", Mr. Eliot discusses the questions: 1. Can Poetry be cited to prove anything? 2. To what extent can it even be cited to illustrate anything? Mr. Eliot, whose magazine "The Criterion", and whose several books of poetry and criticism have won him a larger influence, perhaps, than that of any other literary figure in England or America, has just published "Dante" in the series of books called "The Poets on the Poets".*

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*Contrary to the popular belief that Negro writing is a phenomenon which appeared only after the world war, the Negro's contribution to our literature has a long and interesting history. Mr. Chamberlain is a member of the staff of the New York Times Book Review.*

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*In the fourth of Mr. Hanemann's series of parody biographies Kathleen Norris tells how Nell Gwynn and Charles II learned love and tolerance.*

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*Mr. Nock reveals, in this third article on the France of Rabelais, that the lot of a freshman four hundred years ago was no happier than it is today.*

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THE BOOKMAN is published monthly by the Bookman Publishing Co., Inc., 50c a copy; $5 a year (Canada $5.50, foreign $6. Publication office, 19th & Federal Sts., Camden, N. J. Editorial and general office, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York City. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Camden, N. J.
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In the March Number

# THE BOOKMAN

## ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS: A PERSONAL NOTE

*by* GLENWAY WESCOTT

A vivid and highly individual impression of Miss Roberts as a person and as a writer. Mr. Wescott has known her since student days; he is also one of the keenest appreciators of her art.

## MAGIC AND FANTASY IN FICTION *by* G. K. CHESTERTON

A warning against Black Magic and a plea for White Magic that is at the same time incisive literary criticism.

## PSEUDONYMS AND SOBRIQUETS *by* ANNIE RUSSELL MARBLE

Pen-names of the famous and the little known; a charming and informative excursion in a by-way of letters.

## STUART SHERMAN AND THE WAR AGE *by* G. R. ELLIOTT

The recently published biography of Stuart Sherman has made the literary world vividly aware of the importance of Sherman's career as a reflection of the leading currents in American life during the last twenty years. The unique proportions of sympathy and hostility which meet in this study render it particularly valuable.

## RICHARD HALLIBURTON PLAYS POLO *by* H. W. HANEMANN

A parody biography that takes the great Richard in the footsteps of the great Marco.

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# NOTES ON NEW BOOKS

## *Biography*

WALT WHITMAN *by Harrison S. Morris* (HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS. $1.50)

WE HAVE here the shell of a biographical outline of Walt Whitman on which the author has hung his personal reminiscences, which have to do for the most part with Whitman's last years —those years spent in the gray frame-house in Camden, New Jersey. Plainly recounted, the picture is full of interest: Whitman on his front porch; the continual stream of friends flowing in and out of his house; those last dinners given the "Gray Poet" on his birthdays; Whitman kissing the cheek of a very dirty small boy; all the little happenings, the daily minutiæ that we like to hear about famous people.

AUDACIOUS AUDUBON *by Edward A. Muschamp* (BRENTANO. $3.50)

THIS BOOK is not so bad as its title sounds. "Audacious" seems to have been chosen less for purposes of explanation than for those of assonance and of the beguilement of casual readers. But the biography itself, though made very simple, has merit. It is based on enough research, written for the most part in a straightforward manner, and sensibly concentrated on Audubon's lifelong struggle to complete *The Birds of America*. It tells a clear, sympathetic, tolerable story of Audubon's career.

THE IMMORTAL LOVER *by John A. Steuart* (LIPPINCOTT. $2.50)

A SENSITIVE account of the life of Robert Burns, more aptly immortal singer than lover—for the pure lyric quality of his genius was life transmuted. His personality was in turns deeply emotional, subtly delicate or zestfully bawdy. His drinking in taverns, his amours, his politics, were all graced with the leaven of song. We cannot help but be caught up in the glamour of a life such as this. From his obscure, poverty-stricken beginning to his literary and social success in Edinburgh, where the plowman became a gentleman, back again to the early scenes, where the "reality" of earning a livelihood finally broke his body, we follow the intensely human chronicle of a lovable spirit.

THE WORLD'S DELIGHT *by Fulton Oursler* (HARPERS. $2.00)

MR. OURSLER has yielded himself, heart and mind and a little over, to the personality of Adah Isaacs Menken, one-time circus rider in Texas, who later flashed meteor-like across the theatrical and artistic skies of London and Paris in the 'sixties. To qualify this delightful biography as "romantic" would be to understate the fervor with which the author has portrayed the mistress of Swinburne and Dumas *père*. The more realistically minded might claim that Adah Menken was a restless adventuress and by way of being a specialist in love; in Mr. Oursler's idiom, however, her restlessness becomes the pursuit of a poetic dream and her amatory episides the glorious, glamorous abandon of a passionate woman. But the stage is well peopled, the scenery excellently designed and the book, on the whole, full of enjoyment.

WOODFILL OF THE REGULARS *by Lowell Thomas* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

TO OFFSET to some degree the endless war stories of German experiences, Lowell Thomas has written the life of Samuel Woodfill, a regular who travelled wherever the American army has seen action—China, the Philippines, Mexico, Alaska and finally France, where he distinguished himself in the Argonne and was called by General Pershing "America's greatest soldier". A Kentuckian by birth, he learned the use of a rifle before he could carry it on his



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shoulder and this stood him in good stead. Mr. Thomas has recaptured the spirit of the regulars in this wide-sweeping record.

DANIEL WEBSTER *by Allan L. Benson* (COSMOPOLITAN. $5.00)

THOSE to whom Webster is merely an orator will be surprised by this complete and intimate portrait of the man. The statesman and the myth which has grown up around him are very cleverly combined, for Mr. Benson has been thorough in collecting his material and he has made intelligent use of it.

LORD NELSON *by C. S. Forester* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $4.00)

LORD NELSON has, in recent years, been in danger of being regarded merely as Lady Hamilton's lover. But Mr. Forester's new biography remedies this by giving us a well-rounded, interesting portrait of the hero of Trafalgar. The book is also, in a manner, the naval history of England and the Continent at that period.

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT *by David Loth* (BRENTANO. $5.00)

MR. LOTH has written a swift and florid book about one of the greatest figures of the Italian Renaissance. Lorenzo, as man and prince, stands out as a vivid personality. The author is unobtrusively erudite and works in the best tradition.

TWELVE ROYAL LADIES *by Sidney Dark* (CROWELL. $3.00)

THIS gallery of clear and comprehensive portraits of so many erring queens, including Mary of Scots and Catherine the Great, is in Mr. Dark's most charming manner. He is always a gentleman and, though he quotes from the best authorities, he makes no secret of his chivalry.

DONN BYRNE: BARD OF AMARGH *by Thurston Macauley* (CENTURY. $2.00)

THIS is essentially a friendly biography done by one of Byrne's earliest admirers. It draws a portrait of the popular Celtic romanticist that resembles some of his own later creations.

## *The Social Sciences*

THE MAN A WOMAN MARRIES *by Victor Cox Pedersen* (MINTON, BALCH. $2.50)

THE TITLE of this volume would seem to indicate that it is a sequel to Dr. Pedersen's earlier work, *The Woman a Man Marries*. Actually, it is not. Whereas the earlier book was to some degree organized around woman as a factor in the marriage situation, the current volume discusses "Problems in Consideration"—problems concerning marriage, but by no means the concern, exclusively, of the male. They comprise individual and sex differences, the physiology and psychology of sex life, the home and family in social progress, social conditions involving the family and marriage as an institution; social diseases and changing morals as influences upon marriage.

Dr. Pedersen believes that coöperation by the home, church and state in education would do much to resolve the problems he presents. He has overlooked the press, a medium for the education of all, through which his book—no mean educative factor, itself—has been made possible.

THE NEW EDUCATION IN THE SOVIET REPUBLIC *by Albert P. Pinkevitch* (JOHN DAY. $4.00)

THE NEW EDUCATION IN THE GERMAN REPUBLIC *by Thomas Alexander and Beryl Parker* (JOHN DAY. $4.00)

THESE two reports indicate that the nature of educational changes reflects, often parallels, the nature of political changes. In Russia, the new education, like the new government, is completely severed from the Russia that was; yet it has borrowed from other countries. In Germany, the new education, like the social democracy, is revealed as having its roots in the late Empire; unlike the new education of Russia, it has confined itself to Teutonic origins and philosophies in its developments.

Pinkevitch's volume is a basic text used in the training of teachers in the Second Moscow University, of which its author is President. It gives the objectives of Russian education, content of curricula, principles of methodology and rules or rather precepts for classroom behavior.

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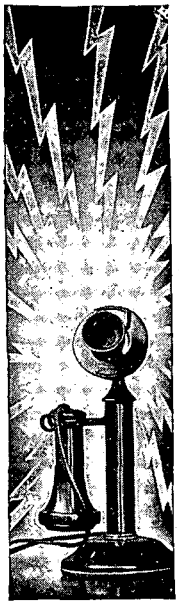

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Before we were members we dreaded an evening at home alone—actually dreaded it. But Joe had foresight enough to subscribe to the Literary Guild and *now we'd rather be alone*. Poor Harry couldn't understand it. "What *are* these books you keep your noses in?"

We had a good laugh at his expense a few months ago. One evening he started telling us about some startling, inside history just after the Civil War. Both Joe and I recognized his source of information at once. He had bought *The Tragic Era*, paying full price for it, of course. We let him run on for a few minutes, then Joe said: "Yes, Harry. We read it too. We read it when it was *new*. It was a Guild book, you know."

But, to get back to the telephone,—when it rang I looked at Joe and he looked at me. "*It must be for you*," he said. I went back to my book: "No indeed. I'm *sure* it's for you." Finally he answered it. Just as we suspected, it was Harry.

"Oh—ho!" I heard him say, clear in the front room. "Playing hermits again. I knew it. . . . Well, listen. I'm on page one hundred and three; where are *you*?"

"What do you mean?" Joe asked.

"I mean I've joined the Guild. And I just got *Coronet* and I'm on page one hundred three and I'm going to read until dawn. . . . Don't ask me to come over. I can't. I'm reading."

We still laugh every time we think of it. But Harry is grateful to us for getting him started in the Guild—and you will be too after you receive one or two of the books and compare them with ordinary volumes.

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In Germany, educational progress owes much to pre-war experiments. Like the movement in Russia, it has opened up the school to everyone; it has expanded, making it possible for the student to advance not only upward through the school system, but also on a given level from one type of institution to another. In Germany also one finds *Arbeitschule,* in which students are given manual, as well as mental work; and an advanced movement for adult education in the Peoples' Colleges, enabling the worker to pursue his studies during the evening and other free time.

## *Miscellaneous*

I WAS SENT TO ATHENS *by Henry Morgenthau and French Strother* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $4.00)

MR. MORGENTHAU, one time Ambassador to Turkey, tells the story of Greece's Herculean efforts to rehabilitate itself after the World War. As chairman of the League of Nations' Commission for the Reconstruction of Greece, Mr. Morgenthau took an important part in the work. He sets down, here, the manner in which the Balkan state assimilated, in six short years, an influx of Greeks from Asia Minor totalling more than twenty-five per cent of its home population. At present Greece is toiling its way to economic self-sufficiency. Among its neighboring nations it is still a diplomatic problem.

THE QUEST OF THE AGES *by A. Eustace Haydon* (HARPERS. $2.50)

PROFESSOR HAYDON'S thesis is that throughout history and in all religions there is one underlying motivating desire. This quest of the ages is to live a complete and satisfying life in this world. Primitive man found this difficult enough and increasing culture, bringing with it increasing demands, made this ideal seem hopeless. As a result, the goal was projected into a future life and religion and its gods became a



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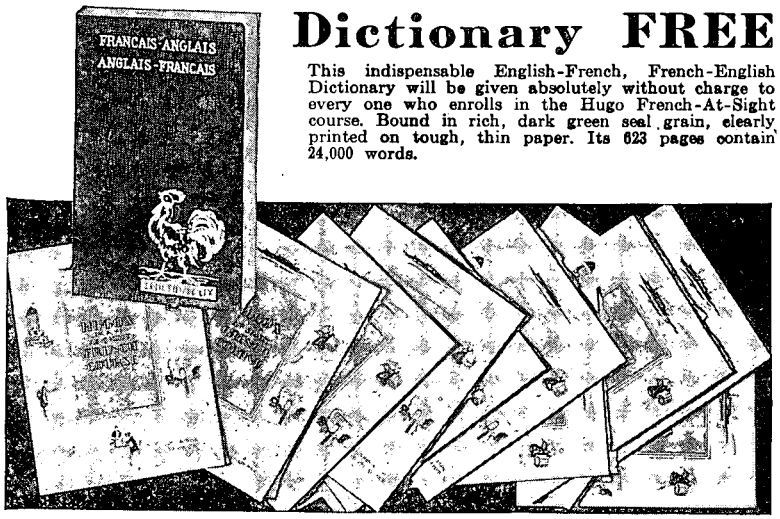


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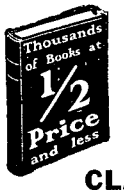


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means to that end. The issue has always been confused and all too often the emphasis has been placed on religion as a thing in itself. This has resulted in the lack of coöperation between religion and the arts and sciences. If, however, now that man has an almost complete mastery over material forces, he directs them intelligently for the ultimate good of all, the quest is almost won . . . That, in brief, is the book. The author, who is a professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Chicago, argues most persuasively. It is, however, a book for those who agree with him.

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AMERICA IN THE FORTIES *by Ole Munch Ræder* (UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS. $2.50)

EARLY in 1847, Ole Ræder came to the United States to study the American jury system. As he travelled about the country he recorded his keen observations in letters to the editor of a newspaper in Christiania. His correspondence, here assembled, reveals the impressions made upon him by his journey by boat up the Hudson—for fifty cents—by the luxuriousness of travel in the mahogany-finished railway carriages of the period, by the American customs of dress, deportment and dining. The letters contain shrewd observations upon the nature of American democracy (at that time) and upon economic conditions throughout the country.

THE SECRETS OF ESPIONAGE *by Winifred Ludecke* (LIPPINCOTT. $2.50)

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NEW YORK IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION *by Wilbur C. Abbott* (SCRIBNER'S. $3.50)

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The author of this book has made intensive studies of his facts, and has succeeded in making it worthy of a place in any library.

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(CONTINUED ON PAGE XXIII)



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THE BOOKMAN

*Edited by Seward Collins*

FEBRUARY, 1930 VOL. LXX; NO. 6

# THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS

*by Douglas Bush*

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S narrow-minded friend Arminius, the middle-aged will remember, did not enjoy reading the *Daily Telegraph*. Borrowing Dryden's dictum on Elkanah Settle, he declared that its style was boisterous and its prose incorrigibly lewd. This harsh verdict always brought remonstrances from the patriotic Englishman. "'No, Arminius,' I always say, 'I hope not *incorrigibly*; I should be sorry to think that of a publication which is forming the imagination and taste of millions of Englishmen.'" As one reads the advertisements of new books, pieced together from the almost indistinguishable reviewing columns beside them, one wonders if much of our critical prose is not at least "a little full-bodied". So many of our most quoted authorities, doubtless, inspired by the example of Cicero, use adjectives only in the superlative degree.

Few writers of our time can complain of lack of appreciation. If they have just got a book printed they are saluted with twenty-one guns, and henceforth the eyes of the nation are upon them. If they have written several books and are getting along in the forties, they have attained the status of grand old men, whose lightest word upon things in earth and heaven is delivered amid a reverent hush. Let us glance at a few pontifical utterances, concerning Evelyn Scott's *The Wave* for example. "The greatest novel on the American Civil War," says Mr. Carl Van Doren. Although the judgment is qualified, since one does not recall a multitude of novels on the Civil War, it may be doubted if *The Wave* will live as long as *The Red Badge of Courage*. "One of the most impressive novels written in twentieth-century America," says Mr. Krutch, with a qualification that is perhaps unintentional. The New York *Times* declares, quite simply, "Like Dante, Miss Scott has written an Inferno"—a verdict which recalls the Homeric parallels invoked to describe *John Brown's Body*. It is no wonder that scholars make poor reviewers; they have read Dante and Homer and are forever incapable of such dewy freshness. But peevish comments from the sidelines are of no account in the face of such a triumphant summary as this: "It has been called by three



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critics a work of genius; by five others, the greatest novel of our time; and by four more, the greatest novel of the Civil War".

"One of the great fictions of literature, a truly stupendous and astounding work," says Mr. Percy Hutchison of Galsworthy's *A Modern Comedy*. "One of the miracles of American life," cries Mr. Rascoe, after reading *Bad Girl*. A foreigner unaccustomed to our critical idiom might wonder which of the two is the better book—but then all service ranks the same with God. Mr. Rascoe, of course, is our foremost wielder of the superlative. "She is one of the most gifted and original artists in the whole field of English fiction. *They Stooped to Folly* is, I believe, her masterpiece": Mr. Rascoe's voice is unmistakable. Mr. Phelps used to be Mr. Rascoe's nearest rival in the matter of large utterance, but the increasing "frankness" of contemporary writing has limited his opportunities for eulogy. However, he can still let himself go on occasion, and a lifetime of saturation in great literature gives weight to such a pronouncement as this: "Mr. Wilder is an artist of the first rank; he is original and profound; he has at command a style of such beauty and accuracy as to be literally the 'last word' ". Mr. Wilder's success, declares Mr. Phelps, "shows that America is ready to listen to a great artist as it listened to Hawthorne". Happy America!

The torrent of superlatives pouring over the torrent of new books gives one much the same feeling of utter exhaustion that is induced by the preliminary announcements of a new moving-picture: "The super-super-drama of the ages—glamorous—tragic—daring — exotic — thrills — shocks — gasps — ten thousand actors—one thousand photographers . . ." "Seeking standards of comparison," say the modest publishers of *Wolf Solent*, "scores of reviewers have fallen back on Poe, Tolstoy, Wordsworth, Shakespeare, and Sophocles. So lavish, so superlative have been the tributes that The Inner Sanctum has not dared to quote them all, for fear of courting incredulity and scepticism." It was indeed discreet to stop short with Shakespeare and Sophocles, for there is no knowing to what real heights of literature we might have been led.

Obviously when writing has made such prodigious advances the struggling pioneers in fiction can hardly be mentioned any more. A somewhat hurried reviewer lately remarked that Sir Walter Scott's "hurriedly completed novels are still well known today, especially to the younger generations". It is gratifying to be assured that the younger generations are less flaming than we thought.

It would take a volume to record the living writers who have achieved greatness or had it thrust upon them. "It is a book," said Mr. Gorman of *Dodsworth*, "that impresses upon us again the potentialities of Sinclair Lewis as an American Balzac." Mr. Krutch, the most scholarly of our dramatic critics, was able, after quoting Aristotle, to pronounce *Strange Interlude* a play "in all senses of the word 'great' ". What a critical notion of style was revealed in a review of Mr. Lewisohn's *Mid-Channel*: "Even when he is writing nonsense—and sometimes I think he is—Ludwig Lewisohn writes beautifully". Mr. Christopher Morley, one of our most benevolent critics, announced that Mr. Ernest Sutherland Bates's *Gospel According to Judas Iscariot* gave him "a more energetic idea of Christ than before". This means, as an English reviewer observes, that "a conception of Jesus as a man who deliberately compromised his own faith and misrepresented it for the sake of popularity is a more 'energetic' idea of Jesus than any with which Mr. Morley was previously acquainted". A number of persons have found an energtic Jesus in the gospels now superseded by Mr. Bates.

There was a time when Mr. Carl Van Doren seemed likely to become a critic of distinction; but his sympathies, always generous, have widened until they embrace almost anything; and yet, so eager are reviewers and the public to be led, an

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Olympian nod from Mr. Van Doren establishes *Bad Girl* and its successors as literature.

But there is no need of heaping up critical opinions which shout at us from every advertising page, or of adding more authoritative names to those already mentioned. Six or eight conductors in New York have the national orchestra under their baton. Their verdicts are caught up and repeated, the echoes roll from soul to soul—until another week has brought another dazzling star into the firmament and the whole business is enacted again. Critical opinion grows, like ballads, by incremental repetition. And the critics seem to agree with Emerson that consistency is the bane of little minds, for when, a few months after the initial judgment, they come to view the year's work *sub specie eternitatis*, they are as likely as not to repudiate the early exuberance—not openly, but merely in the way of sad judicial comment on the small crop of immortals the year has produced. In the case of important reputations, the same critics who inflated them may lead the reaction against them, and then everyone else joins in the hue and cry. Academic persons and others who do not swell either chorus are old fogies who are unresponsive to contemporary literature. It is not clear why the fickle oracles of journalism should, while conducting their education in public, wield such power.

Uncritical extravagance is not, of course, confined to the United States. Mr. Galsworthy has made the fortune of a good deal of poor stuff. Mr. Walpole every week or two discovers the most promising young novelist in England. But the great art of salesmanship is naturally and obviously at its best in this country. And now that most of the critics are attached to book clubs we may expect independence to grow from more to more. As we read in Plato's *American Republic*, a citizen cannot learn too young to cheer for a cause he does not understand at the bidding of a leader he does not know. How potent the virus is the career of Stuart Sherman proves. He started out with scholarship and a mind, and then—as THE BOOKMAN lately said, in an article on Sherman that did not join the chorus—and then he came to comparing a play of Don Marquis with Æschylus and Sophocles.

It is customary to shudder at the slashing judgments delivered by English reviewers a century ago, but how valuable a Jeffrey or Macaulay, even a Lockhart or Gifford, would be just now! It is doubtful if Keats was more hurt by reviewers' brutality than he would be if he knew that in *Wolf Solent* "Keats has come back to life and is writing prose". Really, as one surveys the critical comments that appear from day to day, one asks if we are insane, or illiterate, or merely unscrupulous.

A distinguished scholar and critic a while ago, weary of the adulation showered upon a good but far from great novel, wrote an unfavorable critique of it; the editors who returned it admitted that he had a strong case, well presented, but—they could not afford to print it. To complain of uncritical panegyrics, those already quoted and hundreds of others, is not to disparage the books, which are often quite good, destined sometimes to live six months, sometimes a year or two, and once in a great while much longer. Nor can anyone deny that sane and intelligent reviews are written, by some of the men mentioned and by others, but it is the superlatives that mold public opinion. "I suppose," wrote a man who has always walked alone, Mr. A. E. Housman, "that this is hardly what would be called a favorable review; and I feel the compunction which must often assail a reviewer who is neither incompetent nor partial, when he considers how many books, inferior to the book he is criticizing, are elsewhere receiving that vague and conventional laudation which is distributed at large, like the rain of heaven, by reviewers who do not know the truth, and consequently cannot tell it. But after all, a portion of the universal shower is

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doubtless now descending upon Mr. Butler himself; and indeed, unless some unusual accident has happened, he must long ere this have received the punctual praises of the *Scotsman*."

A number of our journalists outdo the *Scotsman,* and in fact are more reliable than the slot-machines.

If one of the elementary functions of a literary paper is to enable a busy person to distinguish a good book from a bad one, the seeker after the best is in a sad plight. Concerning several thousand books a year he receives the same advice that Dr. Johnson, surely in haste, gave to one who inquired about Baxter's hundred or two pamphlets, "Read them all, they are all good". Such a thoughtful and challenging work as Mr. G. R. Elliott's *Cycle of Modern Poetry*, for instance, received less space in most literary papers than scores of ephemeral novels and slapdash biographies. Confronted with so many important books every month, one may, with pardonable weakness, decide that the flood of contemporary genius is too swift and strong, that one might as well give up the struggle and be content with Shakespeare and Sophocles. But one may still wish that the choir singing its lusty Hallelujah Chorus might be, if only for a month, miraculously changed into the likeness of a picture that once appeared in *Life*—the boys of the deaf-and-dumb school giving, with eager but silent fingers, their school yell.

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# JOHN JASPER—STRANGLER

## *by Howard Duffield*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.—*The foremost problem in detective fiction—that is what Dickens bequeathed to his readers in the unfinished "Mystery of Edwin Drood". Mr. Chesterton says: "The only one of Dickens's novels which he did not finish was the only one that really needed finishing. He never had but one thoroughly good plot to tell; and that he has only told in heaven".*

*The puzzle of "Edwin Drood" will never be solved. It is, therefore, perfectly futile to some folk; perfectly fascinating to others. From the year of Dickens's death to the present, continuations and solutions have occupied second-rate novelists and first-rate critics. Plays, and even a film-play, have been founded on the plot. Andrew Lang in England and Harry B. Smith in America each wrote an essay based on the idea of putting Sherlock Holmes on the case. Two great mock-trials have been held in which Jasper was tried for murder. One, in London, was in the hands of authors: Gilbert K. Chesterton was the judge and Bernard Shaw the foreman of the jury. The other, in Philadelphia, was conducted by lawyers, business men and scholars. The chief controversies have raged around two points: did Jasper succeed in committing the murder, or was Drood—as one of the tentative titles for the book suggests—in hiding, after an attempt on his life? The other question is: who was the detective, Datchery?*

*In this article, Dr. Duffield passes by these problems and studies the antecedents of Jasper, Precentor of the Cathedral, and strangest of villains. Mr. Cuming Walters (himself the inventor of an odd theory about Datchery) has compiled "The Complete Edwin Drood", which is a veritable encyclopedia of the whole controversy. If you look at it, you will see that in this study by Dr. Duffield there is a plausible suggestion which all the other critics have missed. Dr. Duffield, picking up a hint in one place, and a clue in another, has done something which I should have thought impossible. He has contributed to the discussion something really new.*—EDMUND PEARSON.

AMONG the unsolved puzzles of literature, few are more intricate and fascinating than *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Interrupted by death when the novel was half written, Dickens left to his readers a riddle which is equally baffling and alluring.

The work was to have been published in twelve monthly instalments. Only three were printed. Three more in manuscript were upon the author's desk when he died. The thread was cut when only half the story was told. Edwin Drood was a boyish chap, engaged to be married to a schoolgirl. As their betrothal was a testamentary provision of their parents, their love-making lacked ardor and the young people tugged at the tether. John Jasper, a cathedral choir-master, was Drood's uncle, and treated him with an ostentatious affection. On Christmas Eve



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Edwin and a certain Neville Landless, with whom he had quarrelled, met in Jasper's room to arrange a reconciliation. On Christmas morning Edwin could not be found. The pivot of the story is this mysterious disappearance.

From the outset John Jasper takes the limelight, as a study in criminal psychology, the exponent of an idea which Dickens asserted was "very curious", "very strong", "not communicable" and "difficult to work". It becomes quickly apparent that the clue to the rôle for which Jasper is cast must be sought for in Oriental antecedents. The story is enveloped in Oriental atmosphere. All the impulses which give it movement and direction come out of the East. Sultans, Turkish robbers, cymbals, scimitars, dancing-girls and parading elephants, like the fantastic figures of an Eastern rug, are woven into the web of the narrative by its introductory sentences. The moment the covers are opened a waft of opium is released, and every crisis reeks with opium fumes. The short prefatory chapter, which the author originally designated as the "Prologue", and at the close of which, as he himself says, he "touches the keynote", is wholly concerned with an East Indian opium den near the London docks, that great gateway through which the life of the Orient streams into England.

The occupants of the den are a Chinaman and a Lascar. Its proprietress is a hag who is an opium addict, and who "has opium-smoked herself into a strange likeness of the Chinaman". As he enters, Edwin Drood announces, "I shall go engineering into the East". In her first conversation with her betrothed, Edwin's fiancée drags in allusions to "Arabs, . . . and Fellahs, and people", to "Isises, and Ibises, and Cheopses, and Pharaohses", descants concerning the Pyramids and the Oriental trick of divining the future by gazing at a drop of ink in the palm of the hand. Mr. Sapsea, an auctioneer, pompously refers to "Pekin, Nankin and Canton", and proclaims that he comes in touch "with Japan, with Egypt, with bamboo and sandalwood from the East Indies". Neville and Helena Landless hail from Ceylon, and the author, after due consideration, endows them with a "mixture of Oriental blood". Sapsea harps on their "un-English" appearance. Edwin opens conversation with Neville by proclaiming that "he was going to wake Egypt a little", and incessantly alludes to that "part of the world in which Neville was brought up". A sneering reference to Oriental manners, intensified by a contemptuous comment on Neville's "dark color", provokes an angry collision between the young men, which is a vital element of the plot. One of the most prominent characters has pinned upon him the grotesque title of "Tartar", a name as redolent of the East as a whiff of hashish.

Concerning the background of John Jasper, who occupies the center of the stage, Dickens intentionally left the reader in ignorance. A solitary remark as to personal appearance suggests an Oriental origin: "He is a dark man with thick, lustrous, well-arranged black hair and whiskers, and he looks older than he is, as dark men often do". Incidentally, he is shown to be familiar with the languages of the East for, when he listens to the mutterings of the opium-drenched Chinaman and the Lascar, he recognizes them as "unintelligible gibberish".

The revealing clue as to Jasper's personality is furnished by Dickens himself. With sedulous care he kept out of the story everything which might disclose its central secret, but in a confidential conversation with Luke Fildes, the illustrator of the novel, he made a statement which unveils Jasper with startling clearness. In a letter to the London *Times* of November 3rd, 1905, Fildes wrote that he had requested Dickens to explain a matter which he did not comprehend, and without an understanding of which he was unable properly to prepare his drawings. "I instanced," he writes, "the printer's rough proof, where he (Dickens) particularly de-

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scribed John Jasper as wearing a neckcloth of such dimensions as to go twice around his neck. I called his attention to the fact that I had previously sketched Jasper as wearing a little black tie around the neck, and I asked him if he had any special reason for the alteration of Jasper's attire; and if so,—I submitted to him,—I ought to know. He (Dickens) appeared for the moment to be disconcerted by my remark, and said something, meaning he was afraid he was 'getting on too fast' and revealing more than he meant to at that early stage. After a short silence, cogitating, he suddenly said, 'Can you keep a secret?' I assured him he could rely upon me. He then said, 'I must have the double tie. It is necessary, for Jasper strangles Edwin Drood with it'."

That this ample "neckcloth" was central to Dickens's thought is cried aloud by Fildes's letter. The insisted substitution of that long black scarf, for the "little black tie"; his anxiety, lest he might let into the open the very idea which he was so strenuously concealing; his brooding silence; his deliberate weighing of the situation; his exaction of a pledge of absolute secrecy; his stressing the pivotal relation to the narrative, of Jasper's neck-gear—"I *must* have the double tie. It is *necessary*"—his explanation that Jasper is to *strangle* Drood with it, form a combination of circumstances which proclaim with cumulative emphasis that Fildes's inquiry went, like a probe, close to the heart of the "Mystery".

To anyone familiar with the habits and history of the East, the discovery that in a novel saturated with Orientalisms the chief character was to figure as "A Strangler" is electrifying. During two-thirds of the nineteenth century, the period spanned by the life of Charles Dickens, the outstanding feature of English rule in India was the effort to suppress the Phansigars, popularly known as "Thugs", whose victims were invariably strangled. Read in the light of this illuminating fact, the pages of the Drood fragment are found to be bristling with intimations that when Dickens told Fildes that a long black neckcloth *must* be in the picture, because it was *necessary* for a *strangling*, he made known what he had so earnestly striven to hide, that in the lore of this Oriental cult of death was to be found the major clue to the mystery which he was weaving.

The history of the Stranglers is a weird and gruesome chapter in the annals of crime. The bare conception of such a guild of murderers is so abhorrent and appaling that until the most convincing evidence had been secured the English Government refused to admit its existence, and it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that its presence as a cancerous factor in the social life of India became definitely acknowledged. In 1829 the Supreme Government of India established a Special Police Department, known as "Thuggee and Dacoity", to ferret out and suppress this savage brotherhood. Annual reports were made to the British Parliament until 1904, when it was believed that Thuggee had been finally wiped off the map.

The basal fact of the Drood story is a mysterious disappearance, and it was the frequency of "mysterious disappearances" (to quote the Police Reports) which first arrested the attention of the Government. Murder by a Thug was invariably a "mysterious disappearance". Travellers who set out upon a journey never reached their journey's end. Neighbors vanished. Soldiers on furlough failed to return to the ranks. Nothing was ever known concerning a Strangler's victim, except that he was gone. The whole story of a Strangler's crime is contained in Dickens's repeated words, "No trace of Edwin Drood revisited the light of the sun".

The roster of these "mysterious disappearances" became so significantly large as to demand explanation, and the curtain lifted upon as repugnant and terrifying a spectacle as has ever been played in the drama of humanity. The Government of India found

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itself at close grips with a secret cult of "religious assassins". This craft of murder was sanctified, and its practice hallowed as a sort of ancestral rite. A member of that order would be running true to form if, as Jasper did, he wore a surplice over a murderous heart. A Strangler regarded himself as a votary of Kali, the Goddess of Destruction. Victims were never "murdered", but always "destroyed", as a sacrificial offering to her. The fact that, in the Drood fragment, Dickens has repeatedly used the term "destruction" in a very peculiar and sinister sense, flashes into light the thought that he is picturing Jasper as an adept in this unholy sect. When Jasper registers a vow of vengeance, consecrating his life to the pursuit of the supposed murderer of Drood, Dickens makes him say, "I *devote* myself to his *destruction*". This is a very strange and a very significant fancy expression. The natural statement would have been, "I will do all in my power to lead to his discovery, or secure his arrest, or bring him to justice, or insure his punishment". When he couches his determination in the term "I devote myself to his destruction", he is employing keywords in the vocabulary of the Stranglers. That Dickens was thoroughly aware of the baleful purpose of this phraseology and used it with set purpose is strikingly indicated by his selection as a heading for that chapter in which he records this incident of Jasper's dedication of himself as missionary of "destruction"—the one word "Devoted". To a Thug, that word could have but a single meaning. The presence of this idea in Dickens's mind is made still more apparent by his description of Jasper as endowed with an uncanny potency of "destruction". Dickens writes that Jasper gazed at young Landless, "as though his eye were at the trigger of a loaded rifle"—"with a sense of destructive power so expressed in his face" that his companion, who was a thick-skinned and stony-hearted bumpkin, shivered.

Not only did Dickens brand the Precentor of Cloisterham Cathedral with this hallmark of the Oriental Stranglers, but he has depicted him as a practitioner of every principle which is laid down in their science of death. The initial requirement of their system was the identification of themselves with the most respectable classes of the community, precisely after the fashion in which Jasper is introduced as having made for himself a place of high regard among the Cloisterham folk. Thugs became traders, farmers, men of business, even members of the learned professions. Commercially, they were trusted. Socially, they were courted. It was of prime importance that they should pose as good citizens and friendly neighbors. English officers testify to having lived on excellent terms with men whose affability and seeming integrity were only a mask for the instincts and practice of Thuggee. The language of the official records as to the favorable impression invariably created by a Strangler is distinctly re-echoed in the detailed stressing of Jasper's social standing:—"so much respected", "enjoying the reputation of having done wonders as a music teacher", "choosing his society and holding such an independent position".

It was a fundamental principle of Thuggee that the prelude to a murder should be the deception of the victim by pretended kindness. So important and imperative was this step, that its practice was assigned to a group specially trained for this purpose, and known as "Inveiglers". It was their treacherous task to insinuate themselves into the intimacy of their unsuspecting prey to the end that they might strike the death-blow behind the shield of a recognized attachment. Dickens has "writ large" such a relationship between Jasper and Edwin Drood. Underscored in the first pages, it is played up persistently and consistently throughout the story. Jasper was over-affectionate to Drood. He deluged him with affection. Cloisterham's name for Edwin was "John Jasper's beloved nephew". The Dean remarks, "I hope Mr. Jasper's heart

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may not be too much set upon his nephew". The Minor Canon, when told that a visit from Edwin was expected, says, "He will do you more good than a doctor, Jasper". Time and again Edwin protested against being so perpetually "moddley-coddleyed". The affection with which Jasper overloaded Edwin was ostentatious, almost unctuous. Acts of kindness were superabundant. Terms of endearment were employed with studious and exaggerated frequency. Such behavior would seem to mark him, and would certainly qualify him, as a Sothae, or Inveigler, in any circle of Thugs.

The "destruction" of a victim by a Strangler was wrought in accordance with a rigid ritual of procedure. Murder was never committed until a burial place had been prepared. Certain members of the band were chosen as a sort of committee on graves. An out-of-the-way spot was carefully selected in which the body could be instantly and secretly hidden. So expert were the Thugs in the concealment of the dead that the places in which the bodies of their victims were buried could seldom be discovered, except by the confession of the slayer. Jasper is represented as an expert in sepulture. Sounding the keys of the vaults, as if they were tuning forks; cultivating Durdles, the tomb-keeper of the Cathedral, as a companion; continually rambling through the domain of the dead; arranging a night-time picnic in the crypt, during which every nook and cranny in which a corpse might be concealed was explored; taking note of a near-by heap of lime in which a body might be disintegrated, Jasper notably performed this cardinal duty of a Thug.

The observance of omens was regarded by a Strangler as absolutely essential, before attempting the "destruction" of his victim. Upon the eve of an assassination, watchers scanned the sky and air and landscape with piercing vigilance, searching for some token from the Goddess of Destruction. An elaborate code of such signs is catalogued in the governmental records of India. In a recent novel which vividly describes a murder by strangulation, a brace of Anglicized Thugs prefaced their assault by an "unaccountable expedition" across the Scottish countryside. For days their victim had been within reach, but before the attack could be made, the omens must be noted. Jasper, accompanied by the grave-digger Durdles, made just such an unaccountable expedition to the top of the Cathedral Tower which has all the marks of an omen-hunt. It was undertaken at the proper time. The Christmas Eve party, which circumstances had denoted as the moment when Jasper must strike his blow, was at hand. The hour had come when it was necessary to consult the oracle of "destruction", and as he and Durdles made a midnight ascent of the Tower they received one of the most auspicious tokens known to Thuggee. Near the summit, they heard "the chirp of some startled jackdaw or rook". At the next step, as they emerged upon the top, they were greeted with a view of "the river, winding down from the mists of the horizon". The call of a rook in sight of a river, known as "Julkajura", was the most favorable omen which could possibly befall. In the lore of the Phansigar, the Goddess had spoken and had given to whatever plan was in Jasper's heart her frightful benediction. The pair of Stranglers in the story referred to above, during their expedition through the fields heard the cawing of a rook as they caught sight of a river. "Sign and river!" cried the one to the other, in a kind of ecstasy. "The sign of signs!" That same occult token came to Jasper in the Tower. What he proposed to do was blessed by Kali.

In the earliest pages of the novel Dickens had called attention to the rooks which were fluttering about the Cathedral Tower, and embroidered the incident with some clever and whimsical notions. What was really in the back of his head when he wrote that paragraph slipped into view as he proceeded to say that onlookers might almost fancy

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that the behavior of the rooks was a matter of "some occult importance". Evidently he was so obsessed with the thought that the cawing of a rook in the Tower at the crisis of his story *would* be surcharged with occult importance, that the idea tinctured his ink and dripped from the point of his pen. The paragraph is most ingeniously devised to hoodwink the reader, but in its very excess of cunning it seems to whisper "If, by and by, the call of a rook is heard in the Tower, 'stop, look and listen', for that will be a cry of '*occult* importance' ". Those rooks in the second chapter were really red herrings.

The Strangler was directed by Thuggee ritual to use but a single instrument of death, —a fold of cloth known as the "roomal". This strip of fabric had the sanctity of a relic. It was regarded as a fragment of the gown of Kali. Ordinarily it was white or yellow. Such colored stuffs in Jasper's possession would require explanation, Dickens therefore pictures him, when he went up the postern stair to his rendezvous with fate, as pulling off "a great *black* scarf and hanging it in a loop upon his arm". The hint as to color was given in the Kali mythology, which relates that the gown of the Goddess was black; and that grimly suggested "loop" is also distinctly inventoried in the Thugs' handbook of murder. This strangling cloth was invariably worn as part of one's dress, either as a turban or a girdle. Adapting it to English custom, Jasper wore it as a neckcloth, in the fashion of that old-time stock which Fildes was told he must put into the picture, because it was necessary for a strangling. That necessity was created by the rules of Thuggee. If Edwin was to be done to death by an Oriental Strangler, he "must" be murdered in just that way.

The death rubric of the Stranglers directed that the "destruction" of the victim must be wrought by at least two assailants. Captain Sleeman, Superintendent of the Thug Police, writes, "Two Phansigars are considered indispensable to effect the murder of one man". For Jasper to undertake to strangle Edwin single-handed was contrary to the accepted practice, and the futility of his endeavor is definitely foreshadowed. In the first conversation between Edwin and his betrothed, Dickens represents Rosa as interpolating a far-fetched dissertation on Belzoni, the Oriental traveller, into their badinage. "There was Belzoni, or somebody," she said, "dragged out by the legs, *half choked* with bats and dust. All the girls say, they wish he had been *quite choked*. . . . But how can his legs and his chokes concern you?" Nothing in the story, as told to us, makes this prattle about "chokes" anything more than the whimsy of a schoolgirl. But when thirty-five years later Fildes announces that Dickens had confidentially advised him that a pivotal feature of the plot was an attempt by Jasper to strangle Drood, those apparently offhand sentences wear another look, and begin to shine with a strange light. Those "chokes" did concern Edwin, much more than Belzoni, and were not due to the "bats and dust" which, with such careful carelessness, are thrust upon the reader's attention. Those "half chokes", and that "not quite choked", carry one far deeper into Mr. Dickens's confidence than Luke Fildes ever penetrated.

"Half choked" victims were sufficiently frequent to have embalmed themselves in the Thug vocabulary. To quote from their dictionary of evil, "bisul purna" meant "to be awkwardly handled in strangling; to have the roomal round the face or head instead of the neck". "Bisul" is defined as "a person intended to be killed, on whom the roomal falls untowardly, either on his head or face". "Jywaloo" describes a person left for dead, but afterwards found to have life in him. This singular reference to Belzoni shows that Dickens had clearly in mind the intention of representing Jasper as only "half choking" Edwin in his unassisted assault upon him, an idea for which there is abundant authority both in history and in the court records; and it may be fairly claimed that he had laid

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the ground for such a frustrated attack by selecting the only kind of an attempt at murder which permitted it. A thrust with a dagger, a shot from a pistol, a pinch of poison in a wine glass—these would have meant certain death.

Had Dickens lived to relate what happened on the night of Edwin's mysterious disappearance, the tale would in all likelihood be a replica of much that is inscribed on the police blotters of the "Thuggee and Dacoity" Department. To quote a single entry: "The Stranglers contrive to keep company with their victim, and watch for an opportunity to destroy him. This they sometimes create by persuading him to quit his lodging place, a little after midnight, pretending it is near daybreak; or by detaching him from his companions, lead him under various pretences to some solitary spot. In the destruction of their victims they first use some deleterious substance, which they contrive to administer in food or drink. As soon as the poison begins to take effect by inducing a stupor or langour, they strangle him to prevent his crying out. . . . The deed is completed on the brink of a well, into which they plunge the body". To those familiar with the Drood story, such a memorandum reads like a scenario for the Cloisterham affair. But it is actually a paragraph from "General Orders by Major General St. Leger, Commanding the Forces, Headquarters, Cawnpore, 28 April, 1810". It is printed in full in Captain Sleeman's book, *The Thugs*, which was widely circulated in England, and could not have escaped the attention of any writer interested in the subject of strangling.

A Phansigar motif would be peculiarly alluring to Dickens. The mystery which cloaked the very existence of this murder guild, the weird psychology of its members, the uncanny dexterity with which they wrought at their fiendish craft, would strongly appeal to one so temperamentally attracted by the melodramatic elements of human expression and who was such a keen and constant observer of their expression in criminality. During Dickens's entire lifetime, Thuggee was a topic which was more or less constantly in the air. The reports of Captain Sleeman, Superintendent of the force organized for the suppression of the Phansigars, were embodied in a volume which stirred and startled all England about 1835. The *Edinburgh Review* devoted a leading article to the subject in 1837. A little later Meadows Taylor, a high police official in personal touch with all the facts, presented them in the guise of a novel, entitled *The Confessions of a Thug*. This book had an immense vogue. De Quincey mentions it in his essays. Its composition was suggested by Bulwer-Lytton, Dickens's literary comrade, who declared that ignorance of the subject alone prevented him from devoting his own pen to its treatment.

In 1847 Eugène Sue entertained Dickens in Paris at the moment when his recently written *The Wandering Jew* was at its meridian. One of the high lights of that book is a detailed account of Thuggee. Foremost among its characters was a Strangler who practised in Europe the fell craft he had acquired in India. The French author was familiar with Captain Sleeman's reports, for the name of his Phansigar villain is copied from its pages. Dickens could not have been in touch with Sue at just that time without coming to some extent under the spell of the Oriental clan of assassins, any more than a writer of novels at the present day could be the guest of John Galsworthy and remain indifferent to the fortunes of the Forsytes. In 1857, writing of an epidemic of garroting which had broken out in London, Dickens himself refers to the curios in the British Museum which illustrated the art of strangulation as practised by the Thugs. An American novel, called *Cord and Creese*, centered upon a mysterious murder by an Englishman who had become affiliated with the Thugs, and which, in similarity of incident, noticeably parallels the Drood story,

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was published and widely read upon both sides of the Atlantic in 1869, the year in which Dickens began to spin the "mystery" of his final plot. In that same year, the novel-reading world was gripped by *The Moonstone*, that masterpiece of Wilkie Collins, Dickens's literary friend, which is a tale of three Hindu devotees, members of an Oriental cult, who went skulking around England on a secret mission which culminated in murder. The literary atmosphere in which *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* was cradled was dense with a kind of germ for which Dickens's imagination was genial soil, and which would inevitably fructify into a story essentially akin to *The Moonstone*—which novel, it is worth noting, contributed, almost verbatim, at least one crucial paragraph to the Drood narrative. A conspiracy of circumstances seemed to thrust upon Charles Dickens, as a ready-to-hand theme for his final bit of pen-work, the malign activities in England of one whose antecedents in the Far East linked him with the most subtle and abhorrent fraternity of crime known to history.

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# ON THE WORKING HABITS OF AUTHORS

*by Dale Warren*

I HAVE in mind a picture I once saw of a man and a woman sitting in wicker basket-chairs in a garden. Lilac or jasmine or something of the kind forms a leafy background and a closely clipped lawn stretches out before them. The man is wearing white flannels and a tweed coat. His legs are crossed in an attitude of happy indifference and his freshly lighted cigar gives him the air of one who is comfortably settled for a late afternoon siesta. A setter lies contentedly at his feet. With a pillow at her back, the woman leans slightly forward in her chair. She has a pencil in her hand and holds a notebook in her lap.

The woman in the cool summer dress is Winifred Tolton, and the man in the white flannels is E. Phillips Oppenheim. The scene is somewhere on the Riviera and the occupation in which these two are indulging requires but a slight effort of the imagination. For those who know Mr. Oppenheim have heard him describe his unique method of work, and readers of his novel, *The Mystery Road*, may remember its dedication: "To Winifred Tolton, the most wonderful secretary and dearest friend of my life".

Contrast this picture with the traditional conception of "an author at work". Where are the flat-topped desk and the student lamp, the rickety typewriter and the graying dawn? Where are the piles of discarded manuscript and the nervous fingers that tear the hair? Where the dictionary and the pot of black coffee, the thesaurus and the bottle of synthetic gin?

For all I know, Mr. Oppenheim started writing in just such a way. I can easily imagine him as a desperate youth in London some forty years ago, striving against odds to gain a foothold with *False Evidence*, *A Monk of Creta*, and other earlier books long ago forgotten. But even so, the lean years are now buried under an avalanche of opulent decades and the key fits securely into the golden lock. The combination works; and there he sits, corpulent and prosperous, in the garden of his French villa, endlessly dictating, turning out three novels a year. Not even after the hundredth was finished did he call a halt, for fear of developing what he calls mental indigestion. The unwritten stories, crowding for space in his mind, could not be dissuaded from effervescing.

The strange thing about Mr. Oppenheim's plots is that he never knows how they will develop. He gets an idea of two main characters—the man (he is the main thing) and the woman (very secondary). These two elements, together with his first chapter, constitute his preparation. Then he lives with his characters for a while, eats with them, walks with them, plays golf with them. Finally they begin to act according to their own wills and at that point he lets them go, to work out their several destinies by themselves. He "simply pulls the strings". He does not work from a synopsis because if he



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did so he says the result would be so stilted that he could never expect to have another reader. His characters would resent this false note and kick over the traces.

Mr. Oppenheim has so arranged his life that half of his time is devoted to his writing and the other half divided between exercise and sport, visits to London, and travel. "Many a time, earlier in life," he says, "when I used to write my stories with my own hand, I have found that my ideas would come so much faster than my fingers could work that I have prayed for some more speedy method of transmission. My present method of dictating to a secretary is not only an immense relief, but it enables me to turn out far more work than would be possible by any other means. I find my best time for writing is in the morning, from about 9:30 until 1 o'clock. Unfortunately, however, my scheme for the day is complicated by the fact that this is also the time during which I play golf. So I have schooled myself into an artificial preference for working between the hours of four and seven in the evening."

While Oppenheim is hooking and slicing (for who does not?) from one sand-trap to another, John Galsworthy is doing his best work, maintaining that his imagination is most alert in the morning. Then during the hours between tea and dinner, while Oppenheim is dictating in the basket-chair, Galsworthy revises what he has written before lunch. Revision, to the creator of the Forsytes, is not a satisfied perusal which consists of adding a comma here and a colon there, because he revises his manuscript again and again and corrects both his first and second typewritten copies several times. He works in every place and in every weather—in his study, on the train, and best of all in the sun. After dinner he never works, for fear it will rob him of well-earned sleep.

Anne Douglas Sedgwick does not care for sport. Neither does she dine out with the frequency of Galsworthy. Yet she is sorely beset by temptation. Birds are her hobby, at least so she confided to Esther Forbes, and when she is seated at her table conveniently placed before a large open window she gazes for long moments, when she should be working, at the birds disporting themselves in her rose garden. Frequently the author of *Dark Hester*, *Tante* and *The Little French Girl* forgets all about what she is writing and lets her imagination run away with her. "I sometimes wonder," she says, "when I watch a flycatcher hovering with upstretched wings, if any Pavlova can offer such an exquisite spectacle, and listening to the delicate melody of the willow-warbler, dropping among the leaves like a tiny chain of crystals, I have thought that jazz itself was dated. Why not sit down and look about with a pair of field-glasses and listen for an hour or two? If we are rewarded only by the bubbling song of the chaffinch or the sight of the wren, slipping in and out of the hawthorne hedge, we shall have gathered a fresher sense of the value of peace and solitude."

Peace and solitude indeed! How could one who has found them be guilty of either shallow thought or discordant prose?

Miss Sedgwick's preference for a table at which to work is not shared by another English novelist, Maud Diver, who began scribbling many years ago when she was a girl in India. Mrs. Diver admits two trivial idiosyncracies, one of which is writing on her knee in an armchair. The other is her insistence that the chair be out of doors regardless of the weather. It may be a foolish fancy, but she shares to the full the Indian belief that "something living must watch a man at work, if he wants to come near perfection". She wakes up before six, makes her own early tea and starts writing at once, always in pencil and never on a typewriter. When she is "on a book" she writes nearly all day. She says that she is a poor starter but a good stayer and that her novels, in spite of their unusual length, are polished and pruned to the best of her ability.

Osbert Burdett, biographer of Gladstone, Coventry Patmore and the Brownings, is an-

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other writer who abhors a typewriter, declaring that the click of the keys can be heard in the style of all who use one. Fatigue, paradoxically, is the most effective stimulant under which he can work. Edgar Wallace has long since graduated from the ranks of those who must decide between pencil, typewriter, or secretary because he has discovered the efficacy of the dictaphone and through this agency is said to be able to acquit himself of sixteen thousand words a day. Some time ago, James Boyd tried to introduce this labor-saving device into America and posed for a picture demonstrating its use, but I seriously doubt if the custom has come to stay.

A battered old Remington on which he has pounded out several million words does quite nicely for Valentine Williams, the mystery-story writer, who likewise shares Mr. Oppenheim's fondness for the Riviera. When I last heard from him it was installed in an abandoned kiosk which he had discovered so close to the edge of a high cliff above the Mediterranean that if he split an infinitive one half would fall down into the deep blue sea. The kiosk serves as an ideal work-room, for Williams is one of those who can do better work in one hour without interruption than in three hours with one interruption. Virgin paper is piled on one side of the Remington and on the other are sheets of completed manuscript. At the back is a row of pipes, a tin of tobacco, a box of cigarettes, a large ash-tray, a bit of paper or the back of an old envelope on which he jots down ideas and snatches of dialogue which come into his mind as he writes.

Roland Pertwee also needs quiet while he works and has evidently found it in his London home in Drayton Gardens. "The study where I write," he says, "opens its windows on a fig tree and is delightfully quiet in contrast to its predecessors. The other, which I was forced to flee, overlooked the parade ground of Wellington Barracks whence all day long came the clatter of arms and accoutrements and the inspiring music of fife and drum. Sometimes, in fact often, young soldiers learned to play the bugle under my window—a difficult art and one that in practice makes all other arts impossible." Pertwee, I venture say, would have had great sympathy for the luckless Fanny Burney who, finding no peace in the house, was said to have retreated to a cabin at the end of her stepmother's garden at King's Lynn, only to be driven back again by the vigorous and frequently reiterated oaths of the sailors which drifted up to her innocent ears from the river below. Sarah Orne Jewett fared more successfully on her literary excursions, since she had the wisdom, if we can judge from her *Country of the Pointed Firs*, to select a remote country schoolhouse during the summer months while it was deserted by teachers and pupils.

The question of how or where a person shall write seems to lend itself to an amazing variety of answers. Think of the blind Milton dictating to his daughters. Think of Emily Dickinson and her little slips of paper. Think of Proust writing in bed in a cork-lined room in Paris. Think of Amy Lowell writing all night in Brookline with only an open fire, a cat and a box of cigars for company. Think of Trader Horn telling his story to Ethelreda Lewis in South Africa.

Struthers and Katharine Burt each have a separate study in their house in Southern Pines, and the home of the Hamilton Gibbses must be fitted up with two writing rooms. Esther Forbes writes best in her sister's farmhouse in western Massachusetts and Phyllis Bottome in a châlet in the Austrian Tyrol, surrounded by her dogs. Blair Niles works in a scrap of a room in New York, hung with pictures of Devil's Island. Louis Bromfield writes in Paris or on the Riviera, and Scott Fitzgerald wherever he is at the time. Henry Beston prefers his "Fo'cs'le" on Cape Cod. Tarkington writes in a bathrobe. Julia Peterkin goes day after day to a cabin on her plantation in South Carolina and finds that ideas flow most freely when it is too hot to breathe. Demetra Vaka thinks out all her plots lying flat on her back on a couch in a

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shaded room. Dorothy Cottrell takes a machine in her automobile out into the Australian wilderness. Gina Lombroso, the wife of the historian, Ferrero, also uses a portable. When I was staying with them in Italy I was awakened soon after it was light by a vigorous clicking outside the window, and there she was at work on her *Soul of Woman* under a fruit tree in the courtyard.

Warwick Deeping shares with Anne Douglas Sedgwick an interest in nature, as certain of his novels would indicate, and lives in a historic English house, the gardens of which were originally built for Mrs. Siddons. He begins work about seven o'clock in the morning and after a cup of tea sits down at his desk and lights a briar pipe. He is another longhand artist. Absolute quiet is his chief requirement and his wishes are so far respected that on one occasion it is recounted that a servant girl slipped off a pair of squeaky boots before passing his door.

If photographs tell the true story, Viña Delmar writes with a child on her lap, and someone else (I can't think who) with a parrot on his shoulder. Rosita Forbes and Elinor Mordaunt, if my memory is correct, write in Arabian deserts, on Chinese rivers, in Oriental bazaars and now and then on camel-back. Morris Gordin, the one-time Communist, wrote a book on cigarette papers and smuggled it out of Russia in his shoes. Emanie Sachs has a secret studio and no one knows where it is except her chauffeur, who brings out her lunch in a dinner pail. Samuel Merwin used to have a hidden room somewhere in Boston, but possessed neither a chauffeur nor a dinner pail.

A friend of mine once wrote a book on settlement work while commuting by boat from New York to Sea Bright, New Jersey. Another used to do most of his work in the subway. A third had to give up writing because his wife said he was getting unbearable. A fourth began a novel when he had the grippe but never had a chance to finish it because the attack apparently rendered him immune.

Martha Ostenso does no writing until the afternoon; her housework keeps her busy in the morning. The amount she can do in one day depends on how well she can concentrate. Some days it is three thousand words, some days three hundred. On others she writes nothing that she cares to keep. She deplores the habit of taking tea or coffee to whip up a tired brain. *Wild Geese* was begun during an illness in the course of which she thought some form of occupational therapy was necessary. The story itself was written in six weeks, but it had been growing in her mind for four years. "After I got up," she says, "I rented a typewriter for a month and rewrote the manuscript. I had to do it in the one month because I could not afford to keep the typewriter any longer." Stranger yet is the case of Margaret Ayer Barnes, the younger sister of Janet Fairbank. She broke her back in an automobile accident in France and during her convalescence dictated some stories to her nurse and corrected them in bed. When they came out in book form after magazine publication she dedicated the volume (in a spirit of utterly charming forgiveness) to *Saint Christophe, Patron des Voyageurs,* as she had been given, in the interests of safety, a medal reputedly blessed by him just before she started on the trip.

One of the best ways to find out what you want to know about a particular author is to send him a list of questions with an accompanying threat if he fails to answer them. This method was lately used to great advantage on Rex Beach by Ruth Raphael of Harpers. Although Miss Raphael's enthusiasm is such that she easily jotted down a hundred or more, I shall limit myself to the first ten, also giving Mr. Beach's far from evasive replies:

*Q.* Where do you write?
*A.* Wherever I happen to be.

*Q.* What hours do you prefer for writing?
*A.* Mornings. Evenings are good. Afternoons terrible.

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*Q.* Do you smoke while writing?
*A.* Always and invariably. No smoke, no write.

*Q.* What are your working clothes?
*A.* I have never tried a dinner coat or running pants.

*Q.* Do you find alcohol or other stimulant helpful in promoting ideas or their expression?
*A.* Ruinous.

*Q.* Do you ever dictate?
*A.* Never. I've been married for years and am out of the habit.

*Q.* Do you keep a notebook? For ideas? For phrases?
*A.* I've often tried but never succeeded.

*Q.* After finishing a story how long do you wait before beginning another?
*A.* As long as my wife will let me.

*Q.* What are the people in your household forbidden to do while you are working?
*A.* Discharge pistols. Yell "Fire!" Cook cabbage.

It seems that ever since childhood Wanda Fraiken Neff has been a frightful consumer of ink and paper and that, to stave off bankruptcy, her mother started her writing on paper bags and old envelopes. Lately she has acquired the habit of using the backs of galley proofs with the disadvantage, however, that neither she nor her husband get books published fast enough to supply her demand. Scraps of paper are always at her hand in the kitchen, or beside the davenport, for some of her best thoughts come while she is cooking dinner or trying to take a nap. Sophia Cleugh once told me that her idea of heaven would be to go to prison with a typewriter and several reams of paper. Certainly an advanced case of *scribendi cacoethes* and what a far cry from Norman Douglas, who writes only as a last resort, with great reluctance, groaning and protesting! Possibly the happy medium is struck by Fannie Hurst, who laments: "I'm not happy when I'm writing, but I'm more unhappy when I'm not".

At one time when I was spending some weeks at a country inn, Hugh MacNair Kahler was living in the rooms directly above mine. One morning the colored maid came in to make the bed before I felt any desire to get up, and the bright idea came to me of suggesting that she take her dustpan and brush to Mr. Kahler's suite and return to mine when she had finished. "Oh, no!" she answered. "Don't you hear him walking around? Well, that means he's writing and I'm not supposed to disturb him when I hear him walking up and down." Surely enough his measured tread was clearly audible, and in the interests of Mr. Kahler and the *Saturday Evening Post* I hastily arose and started to shave. Homer Croy, I am told, always takes off his shoes before he starts to work, not for fear of disturbing a possible sleeper below, but by way of resisting the temptation to get up and take a stroll.

Writing now and then takes the form of a seasonal occupation, just like haying or delivering ice. Hugh Walpole never writes at all during the London season, firmly believing in one thing at a time. John Buchan does most of his work when he can retire to his home in Scotland, so pressing are the demands of Parliament when it is in session. John Erskine and other professors quite naturally look to the summer months as a gift from the gods.

Edna Bryner goes each fall to a camp in the Adirondacks and works like mad, actually typing each one of her drafts herself instead of passing them on to a stenographer. Bill Hart wrote his autobiography with the stub of a pencil about two inches long so that it would fit into his vest pocket when he was not working. John W. Vandercook summers in New York and says: "I rise punctually at eleven, hurry through breakfast and go to lunch at the Players' Club fifty feet from my door. There I will prolong that function as long as is decent and about an hour after that point, then I will walk fifty feet back and, the day's exercise done, I will sit at a typewriter, moan, make gutteral noises in the

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throat, gaze solemnly at the wall, cross out sentence after sentence, throw away reams of stuff, smoke too much, welcome correspondence as a blessed interruption, and try to finish by next spring the book that my publishers confidently hope to issue this fall".

Maristan Chapman detests the slavery of writing and puts no faith in inspiration. "I may hope for inspiration," she said in an interview, "but I can't count on it." To her, writing is an eight-hour day, six days a week, just like any other job. She does a great deal of revision on her first drafts and despises what she calls the superficiality and the artificiality of the artistic pretence. "If there is anyone alive who actually likes to write short stories," affirms Wilbur Daniel Steele, "either he's a queer one or else they aren't very good stories. There is a time when a tale is a fine and beautiful creature, a masterpiece without flaw, a drama calculated to move one beyond any drama yet written by man; and that is just before you sit down to write it." The truth is Mr. Steele would much rather lay bricks.

Fannie Hurst writes six hours a day, because a shorter period would leave her with practically a blank page at the end of a workday. As it is, the bulk of her day's work is accomplished in the last hour. It takes her from one and a half to two years to write a novel and from six to eight weeks to complete a short story. She regards her method of induction into the creative mood as a bit mundane. Regardless of the night before, her morning begins about 7:30. A walk in Central Park with her dogs. Breakfast. Letters. Reluctance to unhood her veteran typewriter. The excuse of letters to be answered. Telephone calls to be made. A session with her cook. Finally, the round, black hour of nine; with slow and dragging feet she goes to her desk.

As many of Miss Hurst's characters are remembered long after the events which surround them are forgotten, it is interesting to learn that her people invariably precede their plots. The character, she says, sits in the center like an immense spider weaving a web. Strangely enough, Fannie Hurst has never written a story from life. The impulse to do a certain type of story comes and she depends more upon her intuition to lead her through than upon concrete knowledge of a subject. Very often she finds that a character from an environment about which she knows very little emerges the most convincingly. "In the last analysis, methods are not important any more than the number of eyes that used to go blind in weaving a queen's coronation robe. The glory of the fabric is the thing, and the author's eyes, and how he uses them, are his lonely and eternal concern."

The insatiable curiosity of the public is nowhere more evident than where authors are involved. Let a man, or a woman, publish a novel and he must be prepared to state how long it took him to finish it, describe his writing accessories, confess his literary sins and paint an accurate picture of himself in the throes of composition. The public must be told, as Archibald MacLeish bewails, that W. B. Yeats shaves in camel's milk, if indeed that happens to be the case. By contrast, Henry Ford, Mussolini and Lindbergh are comparatively safe. They are asked what leads to success, what is the meaning of Fascism, what makes an airship fly, but no one gives a damn what time they get up in the morning, what they wear to work, or how they like their jobs. Their private and more intimate personal habits are largely their own concern. But authors have grown callous and even if their books are their own the same cannot be said of their souls. What? Where? When? Why? is the everlasting rapid fire and there is no escape. But it certainly pays to be quick on the answering trigger, and my vote for the prize goes to Stephen Vincent Benét, who was recently greeted by a ship reporter just as he was docking from Europe. Asked the reporter: "Well, Mr. Benét, how did it feel to write *John Brown's Body*?" Answered Mr. Benét: "Just about like giving birth to a grand piano".

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# POETRY AND PROPAGANDA

## *by T. S. Eliot*

THE text for this paper is taken from Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World*, page 127:

> The literature of the nineteenth century, especially its English poetic literature, is a witness to the discord between the esthetic intuitions and the mechanism of science. Shelley brings vividly before us the elusiveness of the eternal objects of sense as they haunt the change which infects underlying organisms. Wordsworth is the poet of nature as being the field of enduring permanences carrying within themselves a message of tremendous significance. The eternal objects are also there for him,
>
> "The light that never was, on sea or land."
>
> Both Shelley and Wordsworth emphatically bear witness that nature cannot be divorced from its esthetic values; and that these values arise from the cumulation, in some sense, of the brooding presence of the whole onto its various parts. Thus we gain from the poets the doctrine that a philosophy of nature must concern itself at least with these six notions: change, value, eternal objects, endurance, organism, interfusion.

So far Professor Whitehead. Now I must insist clearly at the beginning that what I have to say has nothing to do with this book as a whole, or with Mr. Whitehead's theory as a whole: I am not here judging or valuing his theory or his method or his results. I am concerned only with this one chapter, which is called "The Romantic Reaction", and only with this one passage in that chapter. And only, therefore with two specific questions: can poetry be cited to *prove* anything? and to what extent can it even be cited to *illustrate* anything?

It appears to me that Mr. Whitehead is here summoning Shelley and Wordsworth to *prove* something in connection with what he calls a "philosophy of nature"; that is what his words *thus we gain from the poets the doctrine that*, seem to me to mean; even if the author did not mean that, it is at least what many of his readers must have taken it to mean.

When so distinguished a scientist and philosopher makes this use of poetry, a great many people will follow him, in the belief that anyone who can understand symbolic logic must certainly understand anything so simple as poetry. And indeed I must say that in the earlier part of his book Mr. Whitehead does prepare us to consent to any use of literature he may choose to make: his knowledge and appreciation of history and literature are so great, and his summaries and reviews of historical processes and periods so very skilful, his allusions so apt, that we are charmed into assent. Nevertheless, I believe that the passage I have just read is nonsense, and dangerous nonsense at that. Consider first how really remarkable it is that we should

> gain from the poets the doctrine that a philosophy of nature must concern itself at least with these six notions: change, value, eternal objects, endurance, organism, interfusion.



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There are, to begin with, two steps in Whitehead's legerdemain. He has quoted, and discussed generally, two poets of one period, Shelley and Wordsworth. These two then become "the poets"; would any beginner in scientific enquiry ever exhibit such a perfect example of imperfect induction? And then the poets are said to demonstrate that a philosophy of nature must be concerned at least with the six concepts mentioned.

Let us take the first sentence:

> The literature of the nineteenth century, especially its English poetic literature, is a witness to the discord between the esthetic intuitions of mankind and the mechanism of science.

To call the whole of English poetry of the nineteenth century to witness such a generality is certainly rash, and the meaning of the sentence is not clear. It might mean that the great English poets were all *aware* of this discord between intuitions and mechanism. In this form the statement might be true of the author of *In Memoriam*. But how far is it true of Browning or Swinburne, and as far as it may be true how significant is it in their respective views of life? But perhaps Mr. Whitehead means merely that poets, by affirming the reality of values, are denying by implication the sufficiency of a mechanistic philosophy. But in this form the statement is too comprehensive, for it applies to all artists at every time, as they all have affirmed the validity of esthetic intuitions. And in the proposition there are two terms to be examined, "esthetic intuitions", and "the mechanism of science"; and we must then consider in what way there can be any "discord" between terms so disparate.

That poor old creature, "mechanistic philosophy" or "materialism" has been in our time thoroughly repudiated by its old friends the scientists, and receives no kindness from anyone but a few liberal theologians. It is not of course quite the same thing as "the mechanism of science": the latter is strictly merely the corpus of pre-Einstein and pre-Rutherford physical theory, which has been rejected more or less by physicists on the good ground that it does not account for all the facts—not on the doubtful ground that it offends poetic intuitions. The mechanism of science is not the same thing as a *philosophy* based on that science, which would assert that physical science would explain the whole universe, and that what would not be explained in this way was unworthy of notice. But in any case, I find myself in the curious position of having to defend the "mechanism of science", which is no friend of mine, against an eminent scientist.

Are we to suppose that a mechanistic philosophy is fundamentally antagonistic to the esthetic intuitions of mankind? That is certainly surprising, as some works of literary art seem to have been built upon it. The philosophy, such as it is, of Thomas Hardy's novels, seems to be based upon the mechanism of science. I think it is a very bad philosophy indeed, and I think that Hardy's work would be better for a better philosophy, or none at all; but there it is: has he not exploited determinism to extract his esthetic values from the contemplation of a world in which values do not count? There is a more important poet than Hardy, who is Lucretius. We cannot deny "esthetic intuitions" to Lucretius. His world was mechanical enough, in all conscience; and just because it was, Lucretius gets the particular emotional values that he does get. We may admit therefore a discord between the mechanism of science and *some* esthetic intuitions; but then we shall have to say that *every* philosophy is discordant with *some* intuitions. The new philosophy of Professor Eddington, for instance, is discordant with some of the intuitions of all Christians except members of the Society of Friends; the philosophy of Dante is not the ideal ground on which to reap the intuitions of Wordsworth.

So far I have not questioned the term "esthetic intuitions"; but this term is beset with ambiguity and vagueness. I suppose that Mr.

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Whitehead means such intuitions as are more or less common to mankind, but of which the artist is the most sensitive receiver, and without which he would not have the material for great art. But however we define the term, there is a gulf, and I think an impassible one, between the intuitions of poets *as such*, and any particular philosophy, or even any philosophical direction rather than any other. The existence of art certainly implies the reality of values, but that does not take us anywhere, and certainly points to no philosophic theory of value.

If I examined each of the sentences I should quickly grow tedious, so I will pass now to the last of them:

> Thus we gain from the poets the doctrine that a philosophy of nature must concern itself at least with these six notions: change, value, eternal objects, endurance, organism, interfusion.

The first question is, if we get all this from the poets, where do the poets get it? Take *change* and *endurance*, for which Mr. Whitehead is so obliged to Shelley. Shelley, I suspect, got them where everybody else has got them in the end—that is, from Plato. The reality of eternal objects sounds to me much more like Plato than a discovery of Shelley, or all the romantic poets together. I do not deny the possibility that Shelley may have had a fresh intuition of these things, but Plato did get there first. And also it is very difficult to spot these intuitions: Shelley must have had an esthetic intuition that there is no God, and that the Christian religion is an odious lie; for he could hardly have reached such passionate conviction on the subject from mere reasoning. (Of course it is possible that he read Rousseau and Voltaire, or even Godwin.) Even if we gain the doctrine in question from *the poets*, we hardly needed to have gone to the poets for that. And in passing, I wonder whether the concept of *organism* is so fundamental to a philosophy of nature as Mr. Whitehead supposes. We may get a better term some day, or we may even return to Aristotle, who knew as much about what this term represents as anybody.

At the very best, Mr. Whitehead is I think confusing the *persuasive* power of poetry with evidence of truth. He is transferring to poetry, as a scientist, that credulity which previous generations, including some poets, are said to have bestowed upon science.

Professor Whitehead may serve as a warning that a man may be one of the greatest living exponents of formal logic, and yet be quite helpless in a field with which he is not familiar. I should not however have devoted this space merely to the churlish pleasure of attacking a famous man; but because I believe that the theory of poetry implicit in Whitehead's chapter is dangerous, because we could prove by it, choosing our examples judiciously, almost anything we like. I also believe, what is a related point which I cannot deal with here, that Mr. Whitehead errs by his ignorance of theology just as he errs by his not having thought seriously enough about poetry.

Now among those persons who have thought directly about poetry—and indeed some of them are greatly indebted to Mr. Whitehead and Mr. Russell for their logical training—there have arisen lately two interesting views. One is that of Mr. Montgomery Belgion, in one chapter of his recent book *Our Present Philosophy of Life*. His theory is that the *literary* artist—he is not concerned with the other arts—is what he calls an "irresponsible propagandist". That is to say, every writer adopts a view or theory of life; his choice may have been more or less justified or capricious, may be more or less right, may be true or false: it happens to be the view which suits *him*; he makes use of it as material for his literary art. The effect of the work of literary art is always to *persuade* the reader to accept that view or theory. This persuasion is always illicit. That is to say, that the reader is always led to believe something, and that assent is hypnotic—the art of the presentation seduces the reader:

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even if what he is led to believe is right to believe, the reader has been *mis*lead into believing it. This theory is, as you see, rather depressing, and is remotely similar to that of Plato, who ejected the poets from his ideal republic; but it is neither fantastic nor easy to overthrow.

The other theory is that of Mr. I. A. Richards, as expressed particularly in his recent book *Practical Criticism*. Mr. Richards holds that while it is probably necessary for the poet to believe something, in order to write his poetry—although he inclines to think that a further step will be made when the poet believes nothing—the ideal reader will appreciate the poetry in a state of mind which is not belief, but rather a temporary suspension of disbelief. The one critic would say, you see, that you will value Dante more highly if you are a Catholic; or alternatively, that if you are enchanted by the poetry of Dante you will probably become a Catholic. Mr. Richards would say, I think, that the more you know about what Dante believed or more exactly the more you know about the philosophy of life on which Dante's poem is based—leaving out of account the question of what and how Dante himself believed—the better: but that when you are enjoying Dante's poem to the full as poetry, you cannot be said either to believe, or to doubt, or to disbelieve, its scholastic philosophy. So you *ought* to be able to appreciate, as literature, *all* literature, of whatever place, race or time.

These two theories are not so antithetical as they at first seem. Mr. Belgion is more concerned with what actually does happen; he says that, whether you know it or not, you tend to believe, you are *influenced*, by any author whose form of expression you admire. Mr. Richards is less concerned with the actual than with the ideal reader: he says, in effect, this may happen, but in so far as it does happen your reaction is impure; you *ought not* to be affected in this way: it is possible and it is right to enjoy poetry as poetry, and you merely use in the reading the philosophy of the author; just as the author was using, unconsciously, that philosophy in order to write the poetry.

In a note to a recent essay which I have published on Dante, I made a first attempt to criticize both views, and to find some way of mediation between the truth of both. I am now making a fresh start.

First of all no art, and particularly and especially no literary art, can exist in a vacuum. We are, in practice, creatures of divers interests, and in many of our ordinary interests there is no obvious coherence. Read, for instance, the information given by those personages in *Who's Who* who condescend to fill in that space of the form marked *Recreations*. There is no apparent relation, to fabricate a specimen, between breeding prize Persian cats and racing toy yachts. This is one extreme of the scale. At the other end, we do tend, I am sure, to unify our interests. To suppose that anyone likes only the *best* poetry, and that he likes all of the best poetry equally, and that he likes all of the second-best poetry in a second-best liking, and so on until he detests all of the worst poetry equally, is to suppose a monster. I do not suppose that there ever has been, or ever will be, a critic of any art, whose appreciation was a separate faculty, quite judicious and wholly isolated from his other interests and his private passions: if there was, is or will be, he was, is or will be a bore with nothing at all to say. And yet, on the other hand, there is no worse bore, and no more futile critic, then the one who renounces all objective standards in order to recount his own reactions. "A voyage among masterpieces" is I believe the phrase that Anatole France used to describe his own criticism, implying that it was merely an account of his own feelings—yet the phrase itself admits that the masterpieces were there as masterpieces, before the voyage began.

But this apparent paradox—this need of aiming at one thing in order to do another—this apparent gospel of hypocrisy or self-

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deception, is right, because it is in the nature of the human soul and embodies its need and craving for perfection and unity. We do tend, I think, to organize our tastes in various arts into a whole; we aim in the end at a theory of life, or a view of life, and so far as we are conscious, to terminate our enjoyment of the arts in a philosophy, and our philosophy in a religion—in such a way that the personal to oneself is fused and completed in the impersonal and general, not extinguished, but enriched, expanded, developed, and more itself by becoming more something not itself.

There is, according to my view, not *one*, but a *series*, of appreciators of poetry. One of the errors, I think, of critical theory, is to conceive one hypothetical poet on the one hand, and one hypothetical reader on the other. It is perhaps a less dangerous error than to have no hypotheses at all. My point is that the legitimate motives of the poet, and also the legitimate responses of the reader, vary very widely, but that there is a possible order in the variations. In my series let us put Mr. Belgion at one end of the scale and Mr. Richards at the other. The one extreme is to like poetry merely for what it has to say: that is, to like it merely because it voices our own beliefs or prejudices—which is of course to be quite indifferent to the *poetry* of the poetry. The other extreme is to like the poetry because the poet has manipulated his material into perfect art, which is to be indifferent to the material, and to isolate our enjoyment of poetry from life. The one extreme is not enjoyment of poetry at all, the other is enjoyment of an abstraction which is merely *called* poetry. But between these extremes occurs a continuous range of appreciations, each of which has its limited validity.

The validity of this range of appreciations is confirmed by our examination of the impulses of different poets. We may for convenience contrast three different types. There is the philosophic poet like Lucretius and Dante, who accepts one philosophy of life so to speak in advance, and who constructs his poem on one idea. There is the poet like Shakespeare, or possibly Sophocles, who accepts current ideas and makes use of them, but in whose work the question of Belief is much more baffling and evasive. There is finally another type, of which we might take Goethe as an example, who neither quite accepts a particular view of the whole, nor merely sees views of life to make poetry out of, but who in himself more or less combines the functions of philosopher and poet—or perhaps Blake; poets who have their own ideas and definitely believe them.

Some poets are of so mixed a type that it is impossible to say how far they write their poetry because of what they believe, and how far they believe a thing merely because they see that they can make poetry out of it. And if I am justified in allowing this range of possible motives to the true poet (and an analogous range to the true reader of poetry) then Mr. Belgion's and Mr. Richard's theories must be considerably modified. For the "irresponsible propaganda" is sometimes less irresponsible, and sometimes less propaganda. Lucretius and Dante, for instance, are what Mr. Belgion would call propagandists, certainly, but they are particularly conscious and responsible ones: you have only to read what Dante says in the *Convivio* and in his letter to Can-Grande to understand what his purpose was.

Milton was also a deliberate propagandist; but here we must allow for another difference. The philosophies of Lucretius and Dante, different as they are from each other, are still potent to influence mankind. I cannot imagine any reader today being affected in his theological views by Milton. The reason is, I think, that Lucretius and Dante are each summing up and restating in great poetry two views which are central to the history of the mind of western man; whereas Milton is merely restating in great poetry a view which was very largely his own invention, or his own concoction, and which repre-

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sents an eccentric heresy revived in his own mind. In Milton it is much easier to separate the greatness of the poetry from the thought, serious as it is, behind that poetry. Milton, therefore, is much more apprehensible from the Richards point of view; because in reading Milton we are I think rapt by the splendid verse without being tempted to believe the philosophy or theology. In considering whether a literary artist is an irresponsible propagandist or not, we have therefore to take into account both varieties of intention, and varieties of effect in time. Milton may, I feel, have had this powerful influence at one time which I feel that Lucretius and Dante can have at any time; but I do not believe that he has it now. And in general, the element of propaganda in the actual effect of any piece of literature upon us will depend either upon the permanence of the doctrine, or upon its nearness to us in time. The effect of a book like *The Way of All Flesh* was, I am sure, for the generation immediately following Butler much what he intended; for the next generation it is not at all the same.

You will infer, perhaps, that we must come to the conclusion that it is impossible to enjoy (or judge) a work of art as such, until sufficient time has elapsed for its doctrines to be quite out of date: so that we merely inspect and accept them, as Mr. Richards would have us do: wait a few hundred years, and we shall know how good any piece of literature is. There are several reasons why this simple solution will not do. One is that when an author is so remote from us, in time or in race, that we know nothing of his material and cannot at all understand his beliefs, we cannot appreciate his work as poetry. To enjoy Homer as poetry, we need a good deal more than Greek vocabulary and Greek accidence and syntax; and the more we saturate ourselves in the life of the ancient Greeks, the more we attempt to recreate imaginatively their world, the better we understand and enjoy the poetry of that world. Another reason is that time, alas, does not necessarily bring detachment. It may merely substitute for a set of prejudices favorable to the poet, another set unfavorable to him. It is interesting to read the comments of Mr. Richards's students, as set forth in *Practical Criticism*, on Donne's great sonnet "At the round world's imagined corners . . ." Some of the misunderstanding is due, I believe, not so much to ignorance of the theology of Donne's time, as to these students' more or less conscious acceptance of another set of beliefs current in our own time.

I have called Lucretius and Dante *responsible propagandists*. But there are some poets whom it is a strain to think of as propagandists at all. Take Shakespeare. He is never, like the former, expounding one definite philosophical system. I am aware that many attempts have been made, and will be made, to expound in clear prose the theory of life which Shakespeare is supposed to have held; and that any number of views of life have been extracted from Shakespeare. I do not say that such attempts are illegitimate or altogether futile; it is a natural tendency to philosophize on Shakespeare just as it is to philosophize on the world itself. Only, the philosophy of Shakespeare is quite a different thing from that of Dante; it really has more in common with, let us say, the philosophy of Beethoven. That is to say, those of us who love Beethoven find in his music something that we call its meaning, though we cannot confine it in words; but it is this meaning which fits it in, somehow, to our whole life; which makes it an emotional exercise and discipline, and not merely an appreciation of virtuosity. Shakespeare does certainly influence us; but as he influences each man according to his own education, temperament and sensibility, and as we have no clue to the relation of his influence upon any one mind with what Shakespeare actually meant, it is almost fantastic to call it propaganda.

When we come to Mr. Whitehead's men-

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tors, Shelley and Wordsworth, the situation is again different. Judging from their effect upon Mr. Whitehead, we should certainly call them irresponsible propagandists. But I suspect that their influence upon such a mind as Mr. Whitehead's is in direct ratio to the vagueness of their ideas, or to the fact that they take certain things for granted, instead of expounding them. The orthodox Christian, for example, is hardly likely to take Dante as proving Christianity; the orthodox materialist is hardly likely to adduce Lucretius as evidence of materialism or atomism. What he will find in Dante or in Lucretius is the *esthetic* sanction: that is, the partial justification of these views of life by the art to which they give rise. And there is no doubt that we are all of us powerfully influenced by the esthetic sanction; and that any way or view of life which gives rise to great art is for us more plausible than one which gives rise to inferior art or to none. And on the other hand I do not believe that a Christian can fully appreciate Buddhist art, or vice versa.

But Mr. Whitehead was not, I suspect, making this use, which I consider legitimate, of the esthetic sanction. You do not get this by going to the poets for maxims or gnomic sayings, or by attributing to them some inspiration as of the Delphic oracle. You can only say: this or that poet has used these ideas to make poetry, and has accordingly shown that these ideas can and do give rise to certain values. These ideas consequently are valid not merely in a theory, but can be integrated into life through art. But in order to do this we are obliged to value first the art of a Shelley or a Wordsworth. How complete, how intelligent, how well understood, is the philosophy used by the poet, how completely does he realize it poetically; where does he get it from, how much of life does it cover? Such questions we must ask first. And what poetry proves about any philosophy is merely its possibility for being lived—for life includes both philosophy and art.

But, we may ask, is the greatness, the comprehensiveness of the philosophy in any actual or theoretical relation to the greatness of the poetry? Actually, we may find a poet giving greater validity to an inferior philosophy, by realizing it more fully and masterfully in literary art, and another employing a better philosophy and realizing it less satisfactorily. Yet we can hardly doubt that the "truest" philosophy is the best material for the greatest poet; so that the poet must be rated in the end both by the philosophy he realizes in poetry and by the fulness and adequacy of the realization. For poetry—here and so far I am in accord with Mr. Richards—is not the assertion that something is true, but the making that truth more fully real to us; it is the creation of a sensuous embodiment. It is the making the Word Flesh, if we remember that for poetry there are various qualities of Word and various qualities of Flesh. Of course, as I said above, for some kinds of poetry it is necessary that the poet himself should believe the philosophy of which he is making use. I do not wish however to overemphasize the importance of the philosophy, or to speak of it as if it was the exclusive material. What we find when we read Lucretius or Dante is that the poet has effected a fusion between that philosophy and his natural feelings, so that the philosophy becomes real, and the feelings become elevated, intensified and dignified.

And we must remember that part of the *use* of poetry for human beings is similar to their use for philosophy. When we study philosophy as a humane discipline we do not do so merely in order to pick out one which we shall adopt as "true", or either to confect a philosophy of our own out of all philosophies. We do so largely for the exercise in assumption or entertaining ideas; for the enlargement and exercise of mind we get by trying to penetrate a man's thought and think it after him, and then passing out of that experience to another. Only by the exercise of understanding without believing, so far as that is possible, can we come in full con-

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sciousness to some point where we believe *and* understand. Similarly with the experience of poetry. We aim ideally to come to rest in some poetry which shall realize poetically what we ourselves believe; but we have no contact with poetry unless we can pass in and out freely, among the various worlds of poetic creation. In practice, our literary judgment is always fallible, because we inevitably tend to overestimate a poetry which embodies a view of life which we can understand and which we accept; but we are not really entitled to prize such poetry so highly unless we also make the effort to enter those worlds of poetry in which we are alien. Poetry cannot prove that anything is *true*; it can only create a variety of wholes composed of intellectual and emotional constituents, justifying the emotion by the thought and the thought by the emotion: it proves successively, or fails to prove, that certain worlds of thought and feeling are *possible*. It provides intellectual sanction for feeling, and esthetic sanction for thought.

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# THE NEGRO AS WRITER

*by John Chamberlain*

NEGRO fiction in America properly commences with Charles Waddell Chesnutt, a Clevelander who is still living, but whose writing falls mainly into the period of the 'eighties and 'nineties. One goes back to the archaic, quaintly-flavored novels and stories of this pioneer with mingled appreciation and esthetic blankness. Most of the Chesnutt plots hinge on such adventitious circumstances that the works of Thomas Hardy seem the very soul of the natural by comparison, but even in the stretches where the antique machinery creaks the loudest one reads with nothing but admiration for Chesnutt as a man. If his plot structure is definitely dated, the fault resides with the white models with which he worked in that era when the novel was designed to tell a story at all costs; and the spectacle of a Negro of the time working with any models at all and producing fiction with many good points is sufficient to compel applause.

For it was the time (to use Chesnutt's own words from *The Marrow of Tradition*) when the "nation was rushing forward with giant strides toward colossal wealth and world-domination, before the exigencies of which mere abstract ethical theories must not be permitted to stand". In the North "a new Pharaoh had risen, who knew not Israel—a new generation, who knew little of the fierce passions which had played around the Negro in a past epoch, and derived their opinions of him from the 'coon song' and the police reports". The Negro of the South had hardly had a chance at schooling, save in the institutions set up by the Freedmen's Bureau and manned by the Yankee schoolmarms who came in the wake of the carpet-baggers; and the Negro of the North was too busy waging his economic battles to pay much attention to the arts.

But Chesnutt, a school-teacher who had lived in North Carolina in the turbulent Reconstruction era, and who had later been admitted to the bar in Cleveland, had the urge to write of his people. Traditionally, he is the first of his race to have "made" the *Atlantic Monthly*. He started out politely enough with folk material, and for a time people were generally unaware that the work of Chesnutt was not that of a white man. But he pressed on to more tragic materials, and handled them as no white novelist could have succeeded at the time in doing. And before he lapsed into silence all the materials of the Negro novel and short story as a vehicle for dramatizing racial problems had made their appearance, either explicitly or through adumbration, in his work.

Chesnutt blinked nothing. The problem of the color line fascinated him. He wrote stories of the Blue Vein Circle of Groveland (Cleveland?)—stories of a society of Negroes of light color that sets itself up above the darker members of the race. He dramatized the results of miscegenation in the South; he wrote of the snags that await the Negro who



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is "passing". The high passions following the Civil War and the rule of the carpet-baggers are built into his novels, *The House Behind the Cedars* and *The Marrow of Tradition.* While the former novel is generally the more admired, it is to *The Marrow of Tradition* that we must turn for the widest use of the materials presented by the Reconstruction South. The problem of a Negro doctor of intelligence in a black-hating community (a problem which has received ampler treatment at the hands of Walter White) forms the skeleton of this work; but the skeleton is an excuse for a generalized picture of a whole town of post-Civil War North Carolina. The novel is not remarkable for its characterization (no more so than are the novels of Thomas Dixon), but its people are credible enough as objectively revealed types to pull the reader along. It is the by-the-way sparks that fly from the wheel that interest us today: the workings of the chagrined southern white gentlemen, slaveholders of old, to the end of stirring up race antagonism against the Negro and his ally, the Republican carpet-bagger. We are moved by the machinations, not by the machinery; for the absurd propagandic twist at the close of the story leaves us undisturbed.

*The House Behind the Cedars*, which came before *The Marrow of Tradition* or *The Colonel's Dream*, is also interesting largely for its incidentals. It, too, is solved by the clumsy intrusion of a man-manipulated Fate, but it is an honest attempt to deal with the dilemma of a good-looking white woman who has a streak of Negro blood in her without resorting to the standard happy ending that marred some of George Cable's stories built around similar situations. We can well believe in the situation of *The House Behind the Cedars*, even though the mesh of coincidence that traps Rena Walden in a tragic death is a little too elaborate to swallow. The novel impresses us as true in essence. It might not have happened this way, but it very likely would have happened some other way.

Chesnutt is at his happiest, from a modern point of view, in the whimsical, poetic folk-tales that comprise *The Conjure Woman*, which was reprinted last spring by Houghton Mifflin, who hold the copyright of most of Chesnutt's works. (*The Conjure Woman* is the only Chesnutt book easily available, for all the rest have long since been out of print.) The worst side of the writer crops up in the short stories of *The Wife of His Youth and Other Stories.* The tales of *The Conjure Woman* are the stock in trade of an old Negro Machiavelli, Uncle Julius, who tells them with ulterior motives. For example, he regales his white masters with some nonsense about the "goopher" placed upon a grape vine with the end view in mind of preserving the income he has been deriving from the scuppernong wine made from the fruit. Julius is a lovable old liar with a fine imagination; and, as J. E. Spingarn says, every story he passes on adds a stroke to his self-portrait—something that cannot be said for Joel Chandler Harris's entertaining Uncle Remus. We accept queer twists from Uncle Julius.

But in "The Wife of His Youth" we cannot accept queer twists. For instance, when the dean of the Blue Veins of Groveland is confronted by the forgotten wife of his plantation days, a little black wizened woman, we cannot believe in the wrench whereby Chesnutt makes it possible for the confounded man to accept the situation and present "the wife of his youth" to the assembled Blue Veins at a ball originally intended to mark his betrothal to a charming young woman. The inner conflict of Mr. Ryder is totally missing. "A Matter of Principle" is the best of the Chesnutt short stories in the realistic genre; it is too plotted, but irony saves it. "The Sheriff's Children," a story of North Carolina, is effective as melodrama, for the sheriff who saves a prisoner from the lynching mob finds himself confronted by his own mulatto son, a son who is willing to kill him to make good his escape. In other

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stories, such as "The Bouquet" and "Ciceley's Dream", Chesnutt can become as sentimental as any of the cheaper fiction writers of his day or ours; but it is a tribute to his artistic conscience that he lapsed only occasionally.

To turn from Chesnutt to his contemporary, Paul Laurence Dunbar, is to descend quite a number of steps. Dunbar's realm was his poetry; his novels are hopelessly inept. He wrote four: *The Uncalled*, *The Fanatics*, *The Love of Landry* and *The Sport of the Gods*; and two books of short stories, *The Strength of Gideon* and *Folks from Dixie*. The moralizing with which *The Uncalled* is larded is as unappetizing as the mechanistic moralizing in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, of the same epoch of American letters; and it has not the Dreiserian virtue of being gloomy in a time of treacly fiction. To read *The Fanatics*, a Civil War story, is to read an unconscious parody; it contains a father who speaks to his son as "You cur, you mongrel cur, neither Northern nor Southern!", and other things quite in tone with such talk. The Dunbar short stories are mostly in the sentimental vein. And the prose in which the novels and stories are written is uniformly sullen, woolly, and of interest only to the archaeologist of letters. To appreciate Dunbar one must turn to the poems.

## II

Between the time of Chesnutt and Dunbar and the renascence that went hand in glove with the development of Harlem there was a lull. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois published *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903, two years before *The Colonel's Dream*, Chesnutt's last novel, was printed, and three years before Dunbar died. But *The Souls of Black Folk*, with its sturdy challenge, was a precursor of another day, a day that was not to dawn until 1912 with the anonymous issue of James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man*. Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* (1901) belongs properly to this period of lull; it paints an unconscious portrait of the fawning type of intellectual Negro who served his race in the only available way during the depressing interval between the time of the dynamic orator, Frederick Douglass (whose own autobiography is so much more virile and inspiriting than the rather goody-good reminiscences of Washington), and the present. Robert Russa Moton, the successor to Washington at Tuskegee, is spiritually of an older era; his books, *Finding a Way Out* and *What the Negro Thinks*, are far from being servile, but they lack the vigor that one finds in Negro literature more closely identified with the growth of the race in the North. However, Dr. Moton realizes that the limitations of Washington are not to be prolonged any longer than they have to be prolonged, for his *What the Negro Thinks* does speak out, even though the terms are polite and measured. Du Bois was one of the first to criticize Washington; quite early he had clearly formulated his objectives, and his course has been towards them ever since.

## III

The challenge of Harlem is direct. Since 1915 a million and a half Negroes have come North, most of them to fill jobs made to their hand by the passing of the immigration quota laws and the consequent elimination of cheap European labor. The pullulation of energy that built a Negro town of Harlem has flowed into the novel, into poetry, into the short story. The Negro has not deserted the South for thematic material, but he has written with Harlem at his back, so to speak, as a forum in which he is at complete liberty to compare notes and to receive the encouragement of a community of interests.

There is a school of white criticism which insists that the rise of the Negro in contemporary literature has had its origins in fad. While V. F. Calverton may have the deeper reasons on his side when he attacks those

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who explain the success of Negro literature on this ground, it remains true that the fashion instituted by the exploitation of the Negro by that archaeologist of the exotic, Carl Van Vechten, has helped the race in Harlem to find itself in a literary sense. Out of a work of dubious motivation has come good fruit. To speak of the rôle played by fad is not necessarily a slur, nor is it a slur to ascribe an element of the popularity of this fiction to the cult of the primitive that flourished after the war; and the Negro may count himself fortunate that the success of *Nigger Heaven* helped to carry the publishers' forts for much of his work. The sad part of the matter is that the fashion has lately overreached itself; Van Vechten has ceased to write intelligent introductions (his foreword to the Knopf reissue of Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* is very intelligent), and has become patronizing, as in his introduction to Taylor Gordon's *Born to Be*, or a stereotyped trumpeter for any Negro art, as when he shouts for a poorly-constructed novel by Nella Larsen.

Fashion or no fashion, the Negro may look back over the movement coeval with the growth of Harlem with not a little pride. In the post-Chesnutt novel there are three Negroes who have done genuinely good work: Walter White, Claude McKay and Rudolph Fisher. Fisher has also written some short stories in which his technical dexterity is apparent, and he is the only modern Negro novelist who does not distort Negro character to make it seem superior to white character. The short sketches in Jean Toomer's *Cane* move us as poetry moves us, and are therefore far from negligible, even though Toomer has failed to give us any credible characterization. Eric Waldron, in *Tropic Death*, gets some sharp effects through his elliptical way of presenting melodramatic conflicts in the Caribbean region.

The Chesnutt tradition is carried on by Walter White, who has gone to the South for most of his material. White is probably not a novelist at heart. Part of his job has been to investigate lynchings in the South for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a work which has resulted in his *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch*. His best novel remains *The Fire in the Flint*, a book which succeeds because of the inherent power of the theme. It is an improvement on the work of Chesnutt, for this story of a Negro doctor's reception at the hands of the whites in a southern town has an inner logic which is not open to scepticism. White's second novel, *Flight*, is not up to the first; its motivations are not always plausible; but it has one memorable passage, a description of the Atlanta riots of 1906. This phantasmagoric outrage has been chanted by Du Bois in verse.

The work of McKay in prose is always poetic, for McKay brings his Jamaica world of color to everything he writes. There is a racial rhythm out of Langston Hughes in his first novel, *Home to Harlem*, a book that is saved from the rut of naturalism by the undertone of brooding provided by an intellectual Negro who is probably one aspect of McKay himself. *Banjo*, McKay's second novel, shows both advance and retrogression —advance because it is substantially richer, retrogression because the material is spread so profusely that it tends to clog the movement. McKay's defects as a novelist lie in his deficiencies as a dramatist; he has not yet seized on a problem that must spend itself in time with serious effects upon the involved characters.

The most able craftsman among the Negro novelists is Rudolph Fisher. In *The Walls of Jericho*, his novel of Harlem, the dominant note is one of comic sincerity. Fisher both moves his characters and moves beside them in friendly pity. His ear is remarkable; he can catch all the gradations of slang; and in a different field he is the peer of Ring Lardner as a manipulator of native idiom. The same qualities that mark his novel are present in his short stories, one of which, "The City of

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Refuge", is available in Edward J. O'Brien's collection, *The Best Short Stories of 1925*. Another, "Blades of Steel", may be obtained in V. F. Calverton's very valuable anthology of Negro literature recently issued by the Modern Library. Each of these stories turns on a trick, but the tricks depend on character for their effectiveness.

If we are to call Johnson's fictional *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* the precursor of the Harlem movement, it deserves extended comment. Although it was written while the author was a United States Consul in Nicaragua, it is evident that Johnson's eye and ear were close to the problems of the Negro at home. There is a real sense of all phases of the Negro problem in it. Its sentences are smooth and shapely; and it has a remarkable analysis of ragtime, written at a period before jazz had grown out of such beginnings as "Alexander's Ragtime Band". Considered historically, the book is one that the Negro would do well to call epoch-making, for it certainly caught the tempo of the future, and it explored problems that remain as portentous today as they were in 1912.

Of the lesser fiction writers not much need be said. Nella Larsen, author of *Quicksand* and *Passing*, cannot yet sustain a novel, although she has some skill at tracing the involute processes of a mind divided against itself. Jessie Fauset, author of *There is Confusion* and *Plum Bun*, has evidently gone to school to dubious models. *Plum Bun* depends so much upon coincidence that it becomes more ridiculous than the most intricate short story of Chesnutt. Wallace Thurman, a playwright and critic, has written one novel, *The Blacker the Berry*, which is "literary" in the worst sense. Du Bois, who spans the whole time between the Chesnutt era and the present, is more at home in the sociological essay than in fiction. His early *The Souls of Black Folk*, written when he was teaching economics and history at Atlanta University, amounts to a sort of Magna Charta of Negro rights, and remains his most effective work. His latest novel, *Dark Princess*, which mingles reality, fantasy and satire in distressing proportions, bogs the reader before he gets well into it. Characterization eludes Du Bois, probably because he is more interested in the future of the Negro race as a whole than in the Negro as novelist.

## IV

Since the World War, the South, as well as the Negro, has taken to the novel. The renascence has included many novels by whites about Negroes, among them being DuBose Heyward's *Porgy* and *Mamba's Daughters*, Julia Peterkin's *Black April* and *Scarlet Sister Mary*, Roark Bradford's *This Side of Jordan*, Clement Wood's *Nigger*, and T. S. Stribling's *Birthright*. Paul Green has used the Negro in plays and in short sketches. Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* and *All God's Chillun's Got Wings* and Jim Tully's *Black Boy* went beyond the color line for dramatic material; and *The Emperor Jones* did much to break down the barrier between the Negro actor and the legitimate stage with Charles Gilpin in the title rôle. Van Vechten's *Nigger Heaven*, as we have said, gave a powerful impetus to the novelists of Harlem; and in spite of its elements of tacked-on sophistication it succeeds in its own right, for its technique—the old wheel-technique of George Eliot—is skilful, and it is evidently close enough to the truth to receive the compliment of imitation by Negroes. (One of its great services is its uncovering of the name of Chesnutt, the favorite novelist of Van Vechten's young writer, Byron.) For his probable influence on Toomer we must not forget Waldo Frank, author of *Holiday*, a novel in which outlines are done away with in favor of essences, and in which the drama of white *versus* black in the South is lifted to a plane of poetry that might be very acceptable were it not for the memory that Dostoevski wrote novels of both essences and outlines that are much more acceptable.

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The Negro himself has yet to write a plantation story as beautiful as Mrs. Peterkin's *Black April*, in which the life on a plantation in the sea-island country among the Gullahs is richly spread before us. In a somewhat similar book, *This Side of Jordan*, Roark Bradford has tried to report for us the life by the Louisiano bayou, but his picture is not up to Mrs. Peterkin's. Mr. Bradford's interest in Negro life, so far as *This Side of Jordan* is evidence, is largely sociological; he picks types, and is more interested in the ravages of disease among the cotton patch Negroes and in the havoc wrought by the Mississippi in flood than in individual characterization. But Mr. Bradford has written one book that ought to earn our gratitude, *Old Man Adam and His Chillun*, in which the Bible stories are recreated in fine humorous terms. E. C. L. Adams, in *Congaree Sketches* and *Nigger to Nigger*, has set down a mélange of Uncle Remus stories and darker, more fearful, legends of swampland and "slavery time". In *Black Cameos*, R. Emmet Kennedy has caught the shadings of Negro dialect in Louisiana. His sketches reveal what he calls the "poetic tendencies" of the primitive Negro. More stories of the Uncle Remus type are told by John B. Sale in *The Tree Named John*. Howard Odum's *Rainbow Round My Shoulder* and *Wings On My Feet*, taking the epic figure, Black Ulysses, about the United States and over to war in France and back, attempt to create a simplified synthesis of the common "low-down" black man. Whether the portrait is true or not is for a Negro to say. Offhand, one would call it too simplified.

The Negro himself evidently fears to follow in the footsteps of Joel Chandler Harris, for, as Benjamin Brawley says, the Uncle Remus type of animal story definitely looks to a past which is dying—a past which saw palpably crude estimations of Negro character flourish in the works of Thomas Nelson Page. And he also evidently fears to attempt an objective study of the life of members of his race in the plantation South that shall have a flavor of cool disinterestedness—the flavor that is in *Porgy* and *Scarlet Sister Mary*, neither of which is spoiled esthetically by the unbalance of discernible propaganda. (This is not to say that they have no faults of any sort.) We have the word of two Negroes of repute, Robert Russa Moton and Alain Locke, that DuBose Heyward's Negro characterizations, Porgy, Mamba and Hagar, are true. Such a statement should provoke Negroes of the South to attempts at surpassing them. From an outsider's point of view we are not at all certain but that Mamba and Porgy are the best characterizations yet done.

## V

Aframerican poetry, qualitatively speaking, begins with Dunbar. Before his advent there had been occasional Negro singers in America, but their verse now sounds pretty dismal. Phyllis Wheatley (who receives a whole flattering chapter in Benjamin Brawley's *The Negro in Literature and Art*) is the favorite of all anthologists of Negro poems who have the historical bias; but her work is too reminiscent of the poetasters of the eighteenth century to have representation in any qualitative sheaf. Phyllis had sufficient confidence in her poetic powers to send a poem to General Washington, who thanked her elegantly for her "elegant" work and declined to have it published because of his modesty. It is barely possible that the Continental Commander-in-chief was being polite. In any case, Miss Wheatley's apostrophe to the imagination, considered her most praiseworthy effort, sounds like Pope minus the redeeming qualities of precision and formal elegance.

Her successors are no better. No matter how noble the sentiment of James Madison Bell's *The Progress of Liberty* may have been in the middle years of the nineteenth century, it literally challenges a modern to bracket it

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with the sterile *Columbiad* of Barlow. Albery A. Whitman, George M. Horton and Frances Ellen Harper offer no better pabulum, certainly nothing that might form the material of a usable past. Whitman, a minister with a fondness for books, imitated everyone from Longfellow to Spenser.

Dunbar, however, is in a different mold. Quite early in life he received the encouragement of Frederick Douglass, and later was so fortunate as to have William Dean Howells for his champion. Much of Dunbar's poetry sounds conventional today; worn turns of speech abound in his work; and he even tried such bankrupt forms as the rondeau. The sin of sentimentality—he was praised in his time for "fine sentiment"—lured him too easily, and he could strain the pathetic fallacy in a sea poem to unimaginable lengths. Yet . . . the passion and sincerity behind such poems as "Ere Sleep Comes Down to Soothe the Weary Eyes" and "We Wear the Mask" are of sufficient force to triumph over the dross of the outer shell; one gets the impact of sincerity, and one is moved to a vicarious experience of the poet's despair. Quite rightly, we think, does Countee Cullen open his anthology of Negro verse with selections from Dunbar.

The dialect verse of Dunbar is under a cloud today. To the Negro it savors too much of the minstrel tradition; which in turn smacks of offering servile song for the white man's delectation. James Weldon Johnson objects to it because it has only two stops—"pathos and humor". And Mr. Johnson is right; Dunbar's dialect poems fail for the same reason that the poems of James Whitcomb Riley fail—they are primarily entertainment. Dunbar himself preferred his standard English verse, but it may be significant that his miscellaneous poems, included in the Dodd, Mead 1929 edition of the collected verse, contain a rapturous tribute to Riley. Granted their amusement value, we must agree with Alain Locke when he says of the Dunbar dialect poems that there "is no comparison in authenticity or naïve beauty" between them and "the more objective lyrics of today". The folk value of "When de Co'n Pone's Hot", "At Candle Lightin' Time" and "When Malindy Sings", for all their genial hyperbole, is certainly less than that of Sterling Brown's "Odyssey of Big Boy" (who had done everything from slinging hash on the Fall River line to shocking corn in Marylan'). It is less than that of Mr. Brown's song of the rolling stone, "Long Gone"; less than that of Lucy Williams's "No'thboun' " or Frank Horne's "Nigger". And as a racial solvent Dunbar's work in dialect seems distinctly inferior to James Weldon Johnson's collections of spirituals or the book of Negro sermons in verse, *God's Trombones*, in which Biblical hypotheses are set forth in sonorous, fanciful, rich rhythms that recall what a comforting doctrine the slave made out of Christianity. It may be giving undue credit to our own time, but the work of Johnson himself seems to have improved and freshened since he wrote "O Black and Unknown Bards", a poem to the early creators of the spirituals that suffers because it is the debased currency of worn tradition. Here we must agree with Countee Cullen rather than with Benjamin Brawley; we must commend Mr. Cullen for passing up "Black and Unknown Bards" for "The Great White Witch" and the Negro sermon that poetizes God's creation of the world.

The Negro poet, in his search for his own mythology, his own resting point in tradition, takes as many differing paths in America as his white brother. Helene Johnson seeks to make capital out of Harlem slang; and Mr. Cullen rings in a comparison of her more colloquial verses with those of John V. A. Weaver's *In American*. Much as we may be interested in what the poet does with the fresh idioms which are tossed up like spindrift by the jostling conditions of our own time and place, we cannot see that Miss Johnson is remarkable; intensification is not her property; and, if a comparison with Mr.

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Weaver is in order, a linking of her name—which would be more to her credit—with that of E. E. Cummings, who has worked in colloquial idioms, is not yet forthcoming.

Cullen himself, who has been accused of too closely imitating English models, cannot escape a search for his own tradition. Speaking as a critic, he says "there is the probability that Negro poets, dependent as they are on the English language, may have more to gain from the rich background of English and American poetry than from any nebulous atavistic yearnings toward an African inheritance". Yet one of his own most poignant poems, "Heritage", poses the question of "What is Africa to Me?", and proceeds to develop, in firm lines, the conflict that must of necessity arise in a Negro whose conversion to a pale God "comes high-priced". In his latest volume, *The Black Christ*, which proves Cullen's ability to sustain a theme, he returns to race and links a lynching to the tragedy of Calvary. Thus it is fairly obvious that the American Negro such as Cullen—whose education is of the norm—must accept the opportunities and limitations of a triple tradition; African, American and English.

It is only upon occasion that classical culture of the stereotyped sort brings a false note into Cullen's verse, and that is when he drags in figures like Sisyphus (who have suffered enough) for mere purposes of elaborating a concept. His poem to John Keats at springtime has a slender, authentic beauty, and many of his shorter poems have a power of epigrammatic concentration that recall Housman. His quality runs to thinness and firmness rather than abundance, but the thinness is sweet and not tasteless. Within his limits Cullen is a real poet.

It is interesting to see what different critics do with the poetry of Claude McKay. Mr. Cullen thinks the poems collected in *Harlem Shadows* show McKay as "most exercised, rebellious, and vituperative to a degree that clouds his lyricism in many instances". Yet has rebellion clouded Mr. McKay's perfectly wrought sonnets, with their powerful sestets that end in stinging couplets? It is Alain Locke's opinion that to the "extent that the radical challenge is capable of pure poetry, Claude McKay has realized it". "But," he continues, "contemporary Negro poetry has found an even more effective weapon and defence than McKay's—

> If we must die—let it not be like hogs
> Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot.

For Negro protest has found a true catharsis in a few inspired notes, and has discovered the strength of poetic rather than intellectual irony." He quotes Langston Hughes's "Song for a Dark Girl", in which the criticism of society is implied, as an example of the "more effective weapon". Evidently Mr. Calverton is representative of a third point of view, for he commends the "charging defiance of a twentieth-century poet such as McKay", and quotes the entire sonnet "If We Must Die" in his introduction to his *Anthology of American Negro Literature*. It is quite true that McKay is a propagandist, and bitter to an extent that occasionally betrays him into bombast, but it must seem that his reputation as a revolutionist serves to obscure to interested critics the positive virtues of his masculine resonance, his often tropic color, his solidity and his bite. When he is at his best his rebellion is in perfect leash; and his convictions are such that he has something discernible to say, whether you agree with it or not.

A test of McKay may be made by reading the best Negro anthology, that of Cullen's called *Caroling Dusk* in which there is a relatively dreary stretch between the names of James Weldon Johnson and McKay. As the names of William Stanley Braithwaite (whose abilities as an anthologist are not to be confused with his abilities as a poet), James Edward McCall, Angelina Weld Grimké, Anne Spencer, Mary Effie Lee Newsome, John Frederick Matheus, Fenton

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Johnson (whose "The New Day" and "Tired" are superior to any of his poems represented here), Jessie Fauset, Alice Dunbar Nelson and Georgia Douglas Johnson roll past, one has the sudden enervating sense that Negro poetry is, after all, very, very minor. The names tend to merge into a caricature of all that one has cast aside as insipid in poetry. But the miasma is dispelled the moment that one launches into McKay's "Flame-Heart" and "Desolate", the first a poem of rich lines and often gorgeous coloring, and the second a passionate variation on the theme of self-disgust. To go on with the anthology and read the poems of Arna Bontemps, Jonathan Henderson Brooks, Blanche Taylor Dickinson, Clarissa Scott Delany and Gwendolyn B. Bennett, is only to accentuate the suspicion that McKay has a gift beyond that of most of his racial contemporaries.

Langston Hughes, whose search for a native substance does not run along lines of any known English or American convention, can make free-verse rhythms sound inevitable —the true test for such verse. The primitive blues resemble nothing so much as caterwauling when they are reduced to spoken words or the printed page (see the Calverton anthology for verification of this), but Hughes can take the monotonous basic structure of the blues and elaborate upon it until he has a poem that concentrates a number of racial aspects and sings in print. The rhythm of life, to Mr. Hughes, is a jazz rhythm, and he gets it in his verse as no one else can. He, too, sings America, but as the darker brother who is sent to eat in the kitchen. There is, however, nothing servile about him; and tomorrow, he says, nobody will dare keep him away from the table when company comes. Of that he is proudly certain. His poetry is collected in *The Weary Blues* and *Fine Clothes for the Jew*.

Jean Toomer is, of course, best known as a writer of prose. But, as we have intimated, the prose sketches in *Cane* are fundamentally poetry; Toomer sings at all times in *Cane*, both in the sketches and in the poems that separate the sketches. He is perhaps the most lovely lyrist of all the Negro poets. Because of the soft beauty of *Georgia Dusk* we may perhaps be forgiven our impatience at his efforts at characterization in his later prose fiction.

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# THE FACTS OF LIFE

## *A Series of Parody Biographies by H. W. Hanemann*

WITH SKETCHES BY HERB ROTH

### IV. CHARLEY, MY BOY

*Nell Gwynn Tells the Love Things in Her Heart to Kathleen Norris*

CHAPTERS ONE TO EIGHTEEN, INCLUSIVE

RIGHT through the line, now, Marquis."

"Block that kick, Duke!"

"Look out for a forward pass, Countess. Never mind the fancy business; tackle low."

Bathed in warmth, St. James's Park lay in the lush glory of a late afternoon sun. Big, black glorious figs fell with a soft "plop" from the fig tree, in the prune orchard prunes fell from the prune trees with a soft "zwish", grapes fell from the grape arbor with a soft "clank". At the foot of the hill, the blue Thames purred lazily over Limehouse Reach. Nasturtium, lobelia, phlox, delphinium, petunia and hibiscus scented the air.

Nell Gwynn looked upon the gay croquet scene with eyes whose customary humor was veiled by a sudden tenderness. Tiny she was, her quick, fluttering gestures calling to mind a wild ibis. Her bright, piquant face was capped with a crown of curly, fuscous hair and from long practice her small hands were sturdy, capable. "Witty, pretty Nell," Pepys had called her—Pepys who had some sort of a job in the Navy Yard but who loved nothing better than to be seen at Roxy's or Lindy's or at gala Dutch Treat luncheons.

For that matter, she thought, what about herself? Born in the coal yard off Drury Lane, rising through a childhood in the backwaters of London's slums to orange girl in the King's theatre, actress in that same theatre and now—by the grace of Charles II, privileged intimate of St. James's Park. In the triumphant progress there had been another Charles . . . two other Charleses. . . . Nell shuddered. She must not think of that, she must force herself not to think of it. "Don't think of it, Nell," she whispered to herself. But old, half-buried memories persisted in making themselves heard. . . .

She would sit apart and wait for Charles, she thought. It was fun, waiting. First there would be a stir at the end of the long path fringed with gentian, hypatia, calendula and mallow, then there would be the excited yapping of small dogs, and then . . . Charles! She closed her eyes.

"Cuckoo!" Someone tapped her lightly on the nose with a croquet mallet. "A penny for your thoughts."

Startled, Nell laughed vivaciously. "Er—my thoughts. Always clowning, aren't you, Charles?"

"Come feed the ducks, Nell."

Slowly they walked down the path to the duck pond and sat by the edge. From the pocket of his beflowered waistcoat, Charles extracted a biscuit, crushed it and fed it to the greedy fowl. "Quahk," they said,



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"Quahk! quahk!" Nell permitted herself a slight giggle at their Oxford accent.

"Happy?"

"Oh!" It was a round, colored, elfin bubble of sound.

"Do you care for me?"

"Oh, yes, Charles. Do you care for me?"

"As I have never cared for anyone." The hand that ruled the English nation closed firmly over the smaller one.

"Charles," her merry, childlike face clouded suddenly with an unwonted seriousness. "Charles, you spoke about my thoughts. When two people are, well, fond of each other, shouldn't they know everything about each other?"

"They do. That is, dear, they know enough about each other to love each other for the goodness and sweetness of their natures."

"Yes, but if something had happened to one of them which wasn't exactly in accordance with her goodness and sweetness, wouldn't it be finer and greater and better to tell?"

"It might hurt him terribly, dear."

"But it would hurt her more not to tell—to know that he did not know and not knowing, that he trusted and cared for her and all the time she was not quite what he thought she was. Oh, Charles, wouldn't it be finer and greater to tell, even if it hurt him, hurt him terribly?"

Charles idly plucked a daisy from the lawn.

"If he really cared for her, he would not want her hurt, yet if it hurt him to hear what hurt her to withhold it might be finer and better for her to nurse her hurt in silence."

"But that would make her hate herself, make her feel she was living a lie."

"But, dear, if by telling him she hurt him, it would hurt her. It would hurt her to hurt him. By doing so she would not heal her hurt and there would be two hurts instead of one. No, there would be three—her old hurt, his new hurt and her new hurt for his hurt." He laid the daisy gently in her lap. "Let this flower advise you."

"Oh, no. Love is neither evasion nor concealment. Love is based on trust and trust is founded on truth. The opposite angles of an isosceles triangle are equal and two parallel lines, however prolonged, will never meet in infinity. Love is greater than the individual. Hurt though we both be, you must know, Charles."

"Know what, you child-woman?"

"You are not Charles the First."

"Odds fish, gosling, is that news? I am Charles the Second."

"No, Charles." Her voice was low and halting. "Not even Charles the Second."

The regal eyes flashed. "Is this treason?"

Nell was on her feet, the brilliance of her eyes matching the king's. "Never! Unforethoughtfulness, perhaps, but never treason."

"Ah," said Charles, calming himself. "Yes, tell me, then." He slipped his arm about her waist. Tightly she clasped his swarthy hand.

"It was the summer of 1667. Charles Sackville . . . oh, I cared for him terribly . . ."

"You mean Lord Brockhurst, later to be known as the sixth earl of Dorset?"

"Yes, Brockhurst. I had been acting all winter and we took a house at Epsom. He said the salt air would be good for me. It was silly, unconventional, I know. But we were like that in the theatre. We thought it was smart."

"You had no chaperon—you and Brockhurst?"

Curls cascaded over the sprigged waistcoat as Nell buried her head in Charles's shoulder. "N-no!" At last she had told.

Too long silence in which her measured heart-beats thudded with the slow taps of doom. Nell forced herself to raise her head and look into her monarch's face. Eyes and lips smiled down upon her tenderly.

"My dear," said Charles, softly, "I have known all that for ever so long. I may have seen you there once or twice, myself. You might have spared yourself the pain."

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*"'Cuckoo!' Someone tapped her lightly on the nose with a croquet mallet."*

"And you don't mind?" Nell was breathless with astonishment.

"Mind? The very thought of another man's —another man's . . ." Charles coughed delicately, "is enough to boil my royal blood. But how can that affect what I feel for you? What has what has happened in the past to do with —us?"

"Us?" whispered Nell. "Knowing what I am, you still love me?"

"Ah," said the king. A ripe coconut fell from a nearby coconut shy into the pond with a soft "splash". "Either love accounts for everything, transcends everything or it is not —love."

"Fool that I was, to be afraid. Not to know —how great you are. My king!"

"Enough, enough, my dear. We must not think upon this ever." Charles rose to his feet flicking the biscuit crumbs from his lap with a lace handkerchief. "Come, let us have music."

Nell was herself again, flying down the path to the bowling alley ahead of the king, running like a little girl. "Ladies and gentlemen," she cried gaily, "our king would

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have music. This way to the king's fiddlers! This way to our Chas band!"

Witty, pretty Nell, indeed. Tears there were in her eyes now, but they were tears of happiness.

### CHAPTERS NINETEEN TO TWENTY-SEVEN, CONJOINTLY

In her boudoir fashioned after the fluted, iridescent shell of a deep-sea scallop, Nell lay lightly upon a rose brocade chaise longue, polishing her nails. At the foot of the chaise sat Merket, her gentlewoman, a copy of the *Daily Reflector* open upon her knees.

"Shall I read to you, mistress?" Fondly Merket sought to serve her in the one thing in which Nell Gwynn was not overly proficient.

"Do, Merket. And don't call me 'mistress'. (It was rarely that her ready wit forsook her.) Read me 'On Piccadilly' by that Winchell fellow."

" 'On Piccadilly,' " began Merket dutifully, with a slight Irish accent, "be Walther Winchell—'This Burg of Ours';

" 'My Lord Montagu is making them walk home from a new post-chaise . . . It's a boy over at Whitehall . . . Samuel (Diary) Pepys and Mrs. P. have phfftt . . . Prince Rupert has ongay utsnay about Mrs. Hughes . . . who is it with Lady Castlemaine this week? . . . or next week? . . . I was wrong, it's two boys—and a girl over at the Palace . . . Ann and Becky Marshall were cockeyed in the Cheshire Cheese, yesteeve . . . the Sir Rob't Howards are anticipating a Rt. Honnabul . . .

" 'Who paid Mrs. Boutell's check at the Elephant and Castle, Satdee nite? . . . the latest score at the Palace is Cleveland, 6—Athletics, 4 . . . Nell Gwynn seen buying a drink at the Bond Street Nedick's . . . how does it feel to be on the other side of the counter, Nell? . . . Sam Pepys and Mrs. Knip borrowed a telephone book and drove to Little Tooting, Sunnay nite . . . the Duke of Albermarle has a new Phrench periwig . . . says he can make 85 in it, easy, or five better than the Duke of York . . . our be-9 monarch, King Charles II and Louise de Kérouaille, that phasinating Phrench phemale are boop-boop-a-dooping—' "

"Stop!" Nell sprang from the chaise longue and tore the paper from Merket's hands. "Where is it? That . . . ! Where . . . !"

"What, madam?"

"That—about the king! And don't call me 'madam'." Trembling, the gentlewoman showed her, and Nell, with difficulty, spelled out the words letter by letter. It was there, unmistakably. "Go! Go!" she cried, fairly pushing the terrified companion out of the room.

She sank down upon the chaise longue and tried to collect herself. Charles—and Louise de Kérouaille! That foreign, Popish—no! And Charles, *her* Charles! Nell thought of her manikin Charles, the weentsie one, lying in his bassinet in the royal nursery, kicking cleverly with his feet, crowing "mm-mm-mm", laughing and more than possibly drooling a little. For hours in silent wonder she had watched him as he lay staring with delicious vacancy at the ceiling or wrinkling his cherubic forehead preparatory to a succession of sturdy howls over a sudden adorable colic. Her heart melted at the thought of his one garment fastened with a gold safety pin stamped with the Lion and the Unicorn.

Nell flung on a furred dressing gown and, the *Daily Reflector* crushed in one tiny hand, mounted the palace stairs to Louise de Kérouaille's apartments on the third floor, front. Unceremoniously she burst through the door.

"Oh, Nell, just in time." The tall, slim, slightly weary and aristocratic Louise looked up from the table at which she had been working with quill and book. "Tell me a six letter word meaning 'very little'."

"Zrunft?" said Nell.

"No, it has to start with an 'm'."

"Mrunft, then."

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"But that doesn't mean anything."

"It means very little," admitted Nell, "but that's what you asked for. I'm not very good at those cross-word things," she confessed.

"I forgot." A tinge of patronage crept into Louise's voice. "You're not very literary, are you, dear? In fact, it is said that you are practically illiterate."

"As who isn't?" countered Nell. "I don't think there was a time in the whole history of England when there were so many ——," she clapped a small hand over her mouth. Artless, direct, plain-speaking, she came to the point at once. "Never mind that—what about this?" She indicated Winchell's paragraph with a shaking forefinger.

"Oh, that!" Louise de Kérouaille permitted herself a tinkle of well-bred laughter. "That dear Walter Winchell! He is naughty boy!" Sometimes she affected a calculated awkwardness with the English tongue. It seemed now a deliberate taunt.

"Is it true?"

"Why not?" answered Louise, coolly.

"But—but he is *my* Charles."

"And because he is your Charles he cannot be my Charles? After all, must he content himself solely with the crude if robust charms of an ex-orange dispenser? At least I have had a background more comparable with his . . ."

"But I love him!"

"If, as you say, you love him, if you really love him, you would be eager to further his interests."

"Yes, of course. That is—I suppose so."

"Well," concluded Louise de Kérouaille airily, "his interests are centered in me."

"I could kill you, I think," said Nell, passionately.

"Oh, no, you couldn't. For one thing it would not be the least bit like you. For another, you would gain nothing by it. You are popular. You are popular because you are kind and thoughtful of the rabble. The rabble love you because they feel you are one of them. Stay one of them, Nell. It may yet be your salvation. A king's favorite—well enough while it lasts, but when it is over, too often there is much of life still to live. Come, my dear, let us not quarrel."

Louise de Kérouaille had spoken almost as one inspired. Bitterly Nell felt the truth of it. She had come too far—from the coal yard to the Court—not to know. The same native wit that had carried her so far could not disown the wisdom of the French woman. And yet . . .

"I shall go to the king. At once!"

"A minute," answered de Kérouaille, "while I write him a little note. You can take it to him . . ."

But Nell had gone.

* * *

"My dear, my dear."

"Oh, Charles, it can't be true! It isn't true!"

Charles threw three or four spaniels out of a large arm chair, sat down and drew her gently to his knees.

"And if it is? Has that anything to do with—us?"

"Us. Oh, Charles—our love, our boy-thing, our romps together, our fun-games and our future. And I had felt so secure, so much at peace, so happy ——"

"But Nell, nothing has changed in the way I feel about you. What I feel about Louise has nothing to do with what I feel about you. Your Charles is still your Charles whatever else betide."

"Betie that outside." The response came muffled from the royal shoulder. Could her accursed wit never forsake her?

"And at the risk of repeating myself, I say again what I said to you at the duck pond, 'either love accounts for everything, transcends everything and remains what it is or it is not—love'."

The duck pond! A flood of memories rushed over Nell, engulfing her, warming her, lifting her on its crest. She raised a shining, radiant face to the king's, for now she knew her heart.

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*Charles threw three or four spaniels out of a large armchair, sat down and drew her gently to his knees.*

"I love you, Charles," she whispered simply.

It was defeat, but it was glorious defeat. Nell had found herself, and finding herself, she had found herself beyond herself . . . above.

### CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR OR FORTY-SIX

Whitehall Garden, redolent of the massed fragrance of late spring was murmurous with the voices of the members of the immediate court. Under a huge lilac bush transplanted from Kew, Lady Chesterfield sat knitting a farthingale. On the grass at her feet sprawled the Duke of York, an expression of mild satisfaction upon his face.

Two hundred or so feet to the left, the little Dukes of Grafton, Southampton and Northumberland played cricket with their mother, the Duchess of Cleveland. In her pram which had been wheeled into the comfortable shadow of an oak, little Mary Tudor, Moll Davis's daughter sat crowing. Molly herself, seeing Nell Gwynn approaching, rose and greeted her affectionately. They had both been of the theatre, those two.

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"Sit down under the oak with me, Nell," invited Molly. Nell arranged herself with a little sigh of comfort and well-being.

"The children are all splendid, aren't they?" she said.

"Lady Castlemaine thinks little Anne has jaundice."

"Oh, nonsense. Anne gets her swarthy complexion from her father. Mary Tudor looks lovely, Moll."

"My dear—eighteen months old and she takes twenty-month gertrudes. The king is so proud of her. And how is Charles, junior?"

"Look—" Nell indicated the middle distance where two sturdy youngsters were chasing a terrified pack of spaniels with a golf stick. "He grows more like Charles every day. No dear, you mustn't hit the little Duke of Monmouth with that approach cleek."

"I hear Charles is making him Baron Hedington."

"*And* Earl of Burford, my dear. And I am to be Countess of Greenwich. It's a scream!"

Moll Davis smiled wistfully. "Are you happy, Nell?"

"Oh, indeed. At first I felt a little crowded, but I grew used to that."

"Oh, yes. Loving Charles, one can understand. He is such a family man."

"And we are all just one large family, one large lovely family, loving and beloved."

"Dear Charles!"

"Dear Charles!"

Arm in arm they sauntered over to a gaily-colored group testing the strange, net-shaped implements for the afternoon's lacrosse. They walked carefully to avoid numerous very small children who with their stiffly starched Nanas dotted the landscape.

"Babies all over the place," murmured Moll dreamily. "Isn't it wonderful?"

"Oh, rather," replied Nell, "—and poor Charles hasn't so much as a bicycle!"

*"My Lord Montagu is making them walk home from a new post-chaise."*

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# YOUNG MEN OF POITIERS

THE THIRD OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE RABELAIS COUNTRY

*by Albert Jay Nock*

THE AUTOMOBILE comes into play on leaving Chinon for Poitiers. There is a way to get down by rail, and if the reader thinks he has education enough to figure it out from the time-tables no one will interfere. For comfort and convenience it is something vaguely like getting from New London to Hartford in the good old days of twenty or thirty years ago, the actual distance being about the same. It is not to be recommended; the reader will do better by himself to rent a car and a driver. Of course, if he prefer it, he may rent or buy one of the little French bugs that somewhat resemble the erstwhile Ford, and do his own driving; but traffic regulations, licenses and so forth, make this a nuisance, and one is not on the road enough to justify it. The best thing is to rent from trip to trip, my impression being that it saves money as well as worry.

We had some matters to look after in Tours, however, so we went up there from Chinon by train, and back again to Poitiers on the Paris-Bordeaux express, getting a compartment to ourselves by uncommon good luck, for it was a piping hot day, and we thus escaped a deal of suffering from the native dread of fresh air. Some authorities trace this superstition back to the Middle Ages, others to the period of the tax on windows; but wherever it came from, it is in force pretty much all over the Continent. The people in the other compartments of our car seemed mostly to be well-to-do bourgeois headed for the seashore, where they would spend the whole day in the open air with practically nothing on. Here, however, fully clad, they shut the compartment tight at once, and began to loll and snooze and sweat and smell more and more infamously and outrageously hour by hour as the train went on, and were no doubt happy in their inconsistency, so who should complain?

Some Americans like the Continental style of railroading; at least, they say they do, and one cannot go behind the returns. I have heard them hold forth on the merits of the Red Train, or the Blue Train, or some other-colored train and the exhilaration of travelling on it. But the color of the cars does not make the permanent way any easier to ride over, as far as I can see, nor does it improve the ventilation. I can think at the moment of only two particulars in which the Continental railways have anything to their credit over ours. They are much more merciful to your baggage—as they should be, because they charge you highwayman's rates for transporting it; also, they do not use the type of open sleeping-car that the Pullman Company still thinks is good enough for the docile victims of its dividend-earning. In all other respects I believe European railroading is far and away behind ours; about as far, say, as our Eastern roads are behind our Western roads.

Poitiers is built on the end of a high promontory of land that sticks out in the



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landscape somewhat like the prow of a ship, and the climb up to the town from the railway-station is quite long and steep. There is a practical advantage in pilgrimizing "by two and two" like the Apostles or the night-police of Paris and Brussels. When you come to a town that has two hotels equally well recommended and satisfactorily described, you separate and sample both at once and, meeting next morning at breakfast, you compare notes on beds, plumbing, fleas, noise, and all the details that make one's day-to-day existence bearable or the reverse, and you then act accordingly. Advice about hotels must be given from very recent experience to be worth anything. By the time you get there the place may have changed hands, or some construction work may be started next door—almost anything may happen. We found an excellent hotel at Poitiers, but discovered in the morning that they were roofing a garage thirty yards away, so we moved to one so much better that it remained one of the happy surprises of our whole pilgrimage. I would mention its name but for what I have been saying about the futility of recommendations. The reader would no more than get settled, very likely, before the *négotiant et marchand des vins* next door would take the notion to begin coopering hogsheads under his window at six in the morning, and I should be put down as a man of sin, probably a hireling of the French tourist propaganda. In the matter of hotels, guide-books are useless, friends are useless. There is only one source of information worth anything—the drummer. Like the Mississippi pilot, his information is fresh every trip, and can usually be regarded with confidence.

There are no industries to speak of in Poitiers; none, that is, of more than local importance. Yet its quality is bourgeois rather than aristocratic; apparently it was always so. In the sixteenth century, when it shared with Lyons the distinction of being the most important town in France, after Paris, observers remarked that most of the space inside its walls seemed given over to vine-culture, and maps of the period convey the same impression. It has the characteristic air of what we call a college town, rather sleepy, poorly built and unimpressive. The view from the park over the river valley is agreeable; not what one sees from the park at Luxembourg, certainly, but somewhat the same kind of thing. The general landscape about the town is pleasant and friendly, and while it is nothing to rave over, one cannot quite fall in with the judgment of J. K. Huysmans on "the slovenly Poitou". He visited the region about thirty years ago, and left in disgust with the "stunted trees, hills ridiculously low, muddy brooks, birds that did not sing, and peasants who sang too much". It is not so bad as this by a great deal but, nevertheless, except very occasionally and in a small way, natural beauty is no great charm of either the Touraine or the Poitou, especially to an American eye.

The life of Poitiers centers mostly around agriculture, the university, and the church. We came into town on a market-day and found the public square fringed with buyers from all parts of the country. The transactions are all by word of mouth; the buyer looks at a sample of grain, says he will take so much or so much, and that is all there is to it, with never a note or memorandum, let alone a contract. This seems to be in the tradition of the French peasant's rooted distrust and dislike of paper, which is one of the oldest traditions of French society, probably. We saw the weekly Saturday market at Tours carried on in the same way and we were told that the custom is universal. At the Poitiers market we recalled Rabelais's observation that the people of the island of Ennasin looked "much like your ruddy Poitevins", for we saw this characteristic preserved. The descendants of the Pictavi seem as a rule a husky lot, and as much attached to their own little ways as their ancestors were. Julius Cæsar kept on the good side of the Pictavi while he was coop-

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ing up Vercingetorix in the Auvergne; but his alliance with their chief did not prevent eight thousand of them from going out on their own to give Vercingetorix a lift.

Rabelais's friend, Jean Bouchet, the historian, lawyer, poet, antiquarian, impresario of local theatrical performances all over the Poitou—he must have been one of the most interesting characters of the period, or for that matter, of any period—gave his fellow-Poitevins none too good a character. He practised law among them and they seem to have got on his nerves. According to him, the sixteenth-century Poitevin was descended from the Scythians, and had undergone successive modifications due to the domination of Romans, Goths, French and English. On the side of the Scythians, he says—but no, we had better quote him directly:

*Ils sont à cause des Scythes vindicatifs, hardis, et cruels en leur vengences, et se delectent à se destruire par procès; à cause des Romains sont assez meurs et pesans; à cause des Gots, lours et grossiers en leurs gestes et façons de faire; assez beaux de corps à cause desdits Scythes et aussi des Anglois; et aigus d'esprit et honnestes en leur forme de vivre à cause des François.*

This is Bouchet speaking seriously in his ambitious historical work, the *Annales d'Aquitaine*. When he turns to poetry, he gives himself even a freer hand, as in the following, written in the fashion of the prevailing contemporary school, the *Rhétoriqueurs*, whose poetic taste and principles he so much admired:

*Poytevins sont loyaulx non caulx*
*Feables non voulans meffaire*
*Begnins non rudes, bons non faulx*
*Manyables non a reffaire*
*Amyables non pretz a braire*
*Amoureux non trompeurs et fins*
*Traictables non voulans desplaire*
*Preux non noyseux sont poictevins.*

This effusion is an anagram; it reads backwards as well as forwards, and when read backwards it expresses what seems to be the net result of Bouchet's observations on the Poitevin character. There may have been something in it, for the geographer Mercator backs up his view. According to him, the common run of Poitevins were "a quarrelsome sort of beings, much given to law-suits, keen, and handy at making five out of four".

There was money in all this for Bouchet, however, for he had a big practice and became well-to-do, so that he could afford to live in handsome style at Poitiers, in the mansion called the House of the Rose, where Jeanne d'Arc was lodged during her examination by the Church authorities. He was always a little close, as you might say—what the New Englanders call "near"—even in his affluent days, and a demand for taxes distressed him especially. He pours out his poetic soul in grief at having been met on the court-house steps at Poitiers by a collector with a tax bill—he, an old man of sixty-nine, father of eight children, and not a rich man, at that. It was monstrous, iniquitous, crushing; the rich ought to pay the taxes! Somehow this has a familiar sound. We used to hear these sentiments pretty regularly twenty years ago, when all our gullible Socialists were agitating for the income tax.

He and Rabelais occasionally corresponded in verse, while Rabelais was at Ligugé near Poitiers; they used the ten-syllable verse with a tailed rhyme—the regular thing for this purpose. One could hardly call these efforts very poetic, but they would probably pass muster with most of Dryden's or Pope's, or their minor contemporaries who essayed the vain business of trying to produce great poetry in an age of prose and reason. They bear the age's trade-mark; when not jog-trotting and humdrum, they are platitudinous and windy. For instance, when Rabelais urges Bouchet to come over to Ligugé and sit in on literary conversations led by Geoffroy d'Estissac, he tells him to "put on the winged sandals of his patron Mercury and fly thither on the gentle and favoring Zephyr", so that he may hang upon the

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speech of "that fluent and eloquent mouth through which Pallas turns her fountain, and distils Castalian streams". This is all very fine, but one cannot help being thankful for the sound literary instinct which cautioned Rabelais to stick mostly to prose. If the *Grands Rhétoriqueurs* generally had written prose, probably the literature of the century would not have been impoverished "to hurt". It might even have been improved. Similarly one wonders why Browning should have chosen to write in verse; or Whitman—especially when one compares the quality of what prose Whitman did write with that of his verse.

Rabelais knew Poitiers well, visited it often, and had close association with it. There is no record of his having studied at the university, but he has many casual remarks on the institution and its life which show that he was on quite intimate terms with them. In his day the university had a fine reputation; not so its students. They were insubordinate, chesty, and notorious loafers, passing their time in wandering about the country when the weather was good, exploring the woods of St. Benoît, and only turning up at headquarters *pour prendre leurs inscriptions*. Pantagruel noticed that owing to their rooted indisposition to study they were much bored, so he undertook to find something for them to do. Picking up an enormous boulder at the grotto of Passelourdin, just outside the village of St. Benoît, a few miles south, he carried it to Poitiers and set it up on stone pillars as a table-rock, for the students to use for picnic lunches and to carve their names on. A drawing made in the middle of the sixteenth century, eight years after Rabelais's death, shows it in such use, and tattooed with names.

It is in fact a dolmen, put up by some unknown prehistoric hands—hands that were dust long before the coming of the Gauls. Putting it up must have been a tidy job in those days. It is a flat stone, roughly twenty feet long by fourteen wide, and two feet thick, raised four feet above the ground on four stone pillars, one of which gave way at some time in the last two hundred years, letting the dolmen fall at its corner. This monument still goes by the name of the Lifted Stone, which it bore in Rabelais's time. We went to see it. The town has grown out to it now, and the enclosure in which it stands abuts on a nice commodious jail. Near by is a cemetery of unthinkable antiquity; it was old in the earliest Christian times, older still in the seventh century when someone built a sort of mortuary chapel there, which was discovered and dug out to light in 1878, and is now one of the best preserved and most interesting of France's historical monuments.

Students' habits seem to have changed but little in four hundred years—though why should they have changed? Rabelais says that no student could matriculate at the University of Poitiers until he had drunk "at the caballine fountain of Croutelle, passed at Passelourdin, and climbed up upon the Lifted Stone". Probably this refers to some ceremony of initiating freshmen. We went down to Croutelle, a little village about five miles south-west, on the highway from Paris to Bayonne. The "caballine fountain" is a lovely little road-side spring, hidden in the deep shade of some woods; for some reason, the sight of it remains in one's memory as a peculiarly gratifying recollection. We also went to St. Benoît, where the grottoes of Passelourdin are. They are deep natural caverns in a perpendicular limestone cliff, and one reaches them over a short path about two feet wide in the edge of the cliff, where one's elbow hangs over a precipice a couple of hundred feet deep as one walks along. There is an iron railing there now, so one feels less temptation to "scrooge", but without the rail, it must have been something of a trial to an unsteady head to "pass at Passelourdin", and one wonders how many dizzy freshmen came to grief there, and whether anything was ever done about it. The grottoes them-

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selves are just about what limestone grottoes usually are, but the view from them up the river-valley is large and lovely, especially on a perfect day of strong sunlight such as we had. In fact, in all our months of snail's-pace pilgrimizing, we encountered but one shower, no more than fifteen minutes long. This was rough on agriculture generally, but said to be good for the wine-crop, and certainly good for us. There were one or two showers at night while we were at Poitiers, but only the one brief and business-like downpour in the day time.

Students nicknamed their teachers in the sixteenth century, as now. In the forty-first chapter of the Third Book, Bridlegoose tells a story of the time when he was "a law-student at Poitiers, under *Brocadium Juris*". The Faculty of Law seems always to have been this university's strong suit. Theology was weakest of the four faculties. Medicine developed later into something fairly respectable. The Faculty of Literature had seven colleges, one of which was the College of Puygarreau, Jean Bouchet's *alma mater*. But the real pride of the university was in the chairs of law. One of these was filled by a Scotchman who stuck to his job for sixty years, all through the first half of the sixteenth century, and had a son—or perhaps a brother—holding down another chair on the same faculty. Rabelais mentions him in the fifty-second chapter of the Fourth Book, when after Homenas's discourse on the sacred decretals, Panurge says that by chance he once read a chapter or two of them at Poitiers, "at the most decretalipotent Scotch doctor's". This worthy's name was Robert Ireland, and he lived on a street that is still called Scotchmen's Street—quite a well-favored street, and handy to the post-office. There was a considerable implantation of Scotchmen here in his time, and no doubt they herded together on this street, after the fashion of emigrés everywhere, so that they could talk things over and tell one another how much better they were done at home—haggis, for instance, and oatmeal. Think of a French cook stewing up oatmeal porridge in Poitiers for Scotchmen! The relations between France and the British Isles drew closer when, in a few years after Rabelais's death, the ill-fated Francis II married the worse-fated Mary Stuart. Poitiers then became part of Mary's dowry, and this may have brought in a fresh influx of her countrymen. There is a tradition that Francis Bacon was a student at the University of Poitiers, but his name does not appear on the books, and nothing is actually known of the connection.

One is impressed particularly here, as in every French university town, by the insignificance of the academic "plant", as compared with ours; also by the insignificance of the product of our plant as compared with theirs. You could not possibly induce a modern, up-to-date, live-wire, go-getting American college president even to look at the equipment of the University of Poitiers. The old university at Brussels looks like a pretty good family mansion gone to seed. But think of the scholarship that comes out of Poitiers and Brussels; and after all, scholarship is something to be thought of—ain't it?—in connection with university life. The American school-plant is the finest in the world, and what I have seen—which has been a good deal—of its run-of-mine product is hardly worth powder enough to blow it to the Old Nick. There is an interesting anomaly here, which I should think would in time dawn on those who chip in so liberally to endow our institutions of learning. Would they invest in an automobile concern that set up factories all over the country to produce bogus and ramshackle cars that could not make a mile an hour without breaking down? I trow not. Yet they are every day committing just the equivalent of that lunacy in subsidizing the American school.

Poitiers, perhaps curiously, was not the literary center of the Poitou in the sixteenth century. That honor belongs to the little town, hardly more than a village, of Fon-

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tenay-le-Comte. We are very much keyed up over the prospect of our visit there, especially my fellow wayfarer, who is far better up on the fine points of the period than I am, and is seized with the *fougue de dix-huit ans*, or a first-rate imitation of it, at the thought of seeing Fontenay. Poitiers, however, did nourish a few men of eminence in letters. Joachim du Bellay, of the illustrious family which so staunchly befriended Rabelais, was a student here; he was one of the Pleiad poets and, after his friend Ronsard, perhaps the best of them. Nicolas Rapin, who helped produce the *Satyre Ménippée*, also studied here, though he lived at Fontenay. This satire seems to have done a good deal to end the Religious Wars, which is much to its credit. Protestantism may have been a great moral force in the world, but when one sees the pitiful evidences of its vandalism everywhere here, the overhead seems a little high. Probably, too, Bishop Cannon and his array of latter-day militant Protestantism are as inaccessible to the appeal of beauty and poetry as the French Protestants of the sixteenth century, or as Cromwell's Ironsides "smashing the mighty big angels in glass". Protestantism seems to have stood still in this respect during four hundred years. One literary genius, by the way, that Poitiers harbored for a time was John Calvin. He was here in 1534, teaching his doctrines more or less surreptitiously; it is said that he used the grottoes of Passelourdin for this purpose, though there is no disinct evidence that he did.

It would have been money in Poitiers's pocket if he had been bottled up there. Twenty-eight years later, Calvin's disciples pretty well cleaned the town out of every archeological and esthetic treasure it had; the thirteenth-century choir-stalls of the cathedral somehow escaped. The Calvinists even burglarized the tomb of our old friend St. Radegonde, took out her poor remains and burned them. What they could not destroy they defaced; what they could not deface satisfactorily they defiled.

All this sets one thinking about the position of the greater spirits of the Renaissance—Erasmus, Rabelais, More, Budé—towards the religious controversy. Time has abundantly justified it. The Roman organization was pretty bad, but there certainly was nothing in Protestantism to justify breaking with it—intellectually, the one was as unsound as the other, and the religious temper of Protestantism was surely no improvement on that of ultramontane Catholicism. Socially, too, was it worth while to break up Catholic culture merely in order to overspread the world with the appalling hideousness of Geneva's civilization? They took neither side; they were sure that the emancipation offered by Protestantism was really no emancipation at all, but only a change of masters, and that the world would probably find it, in the long run, not worth the price.

St. Radegonde's career in Poitiers leads to a most interesting train of observations, too long to follow out here. We shall pick it up when next we have occasion to write. Having lain visible ever since the sixth century, it will probably not be lost or obliterated in a few more weeks.

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# ROADSIDE MEETINGS OF A LITERARY NOMAD

## V. JOAQUIN MILLER'S CABIN—FULLER AND THE CHICAGO GROUP—EUGENE FIELD

*by Hamlin Garland*

WHEN I was a lad of fifteen or sixteen, I chanced to read a poem called "Kit Carson's Ride" which appealed so strongly to my imagination that I seized upon it for use as a public declamation. It had something of the magical West in it: horsemen, buffalo and red men. It was as new in subject as it was swift and free of movement; and the author's name, Joaquin Miller, suggested Spanish or Mexican origin.

In my Boston studies of the local-color novel and the vernacular in verse, I came to a better knowledge of Miller. I grouped him with Bret Harte and thought of him as one of the leaders in a new and most significant movement. In point of time as well as in the spirit and color of his work he was a pioneer, as Walt Whitman somewhat cautiously admitted.

Admiring his verse at its best I was less outspoken when dealing with his plays, his descriptive articles and his short stories. How could a man be at his best while skittering from Oregon to England, from England to Italy and from New York to Nicaragua! I never knew where to look for him or what he would next attempt. He was said to be part Mexican; a bandit, horse-thief and Indian fighter. Others considered him a *poseur,* a fraudulent miner and a stage cowboy. It was said that while in London he wore jack-boots, a Mexican serape, a broad-brimmed hat and long hair like a scout, and that similarly attired he had called on the editor of the *Century Magazine,* all for the advertising which resulted.

Notwithstanding all these reports I continued to quote his poems in my lectures. I had no expectation of ever seeing Miller, for no one seemed to know where he lived, although some of his later poems indicated that he had retired to a home on the hills near San Francisco, defeated and embittered by his contact with New York and London. The only person I knew who could tell me anything about his personal history was Richard Watson Gilder, who was frankly contemptuous of him. "He is a mountebank," he said with gentle authority. "I've no use for a man who turns up at a reception looking like a bad man in a mining camp."

"But he can write."

"Yes, he can write. He's done a few fine things, but he writes too much."

However I retained my interest and when in the autumn of 1892 I found myself booked for a tour of California I promised myself a call on "the poet of the Sierras", if he could be found.

A hundred times on my journey across the continent I quoted him, and at my earliest opportunity I asked my San Francisco friends about him. He lived in Oakland, I was informed, and early one day I took the ferry for Oakland with the entire afternoon before me in which to find him. It was well



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that I started early, for no one knew exactly where he lived. In the directory I found this modest inscription,

C. H. Miller, Fruit Grower,
Residence on the Heights.

It made me think of rugged John Burroughs with his garden on the Hudson. I inquired where the Heights were, and of the poet. Everybody seemed to know of Miller but nobody seemed to know where to find him. One young man said it was a long walk up to the foothills; he had been up there with a party of young people once, but it had been in the night and a hard climb, and he couldn't remember much about which road they had taken.

Two or three asked me if I were going up to interview him, which made me understand something of the poet's reason in getting so far away. I met a young man on my walk across to a suburban horse-car line. He said, "Yes, I know Miller. He's a rough old fellow; wears boots".

After leaving the horse-car which ran within two miles of his house, I started towards the mountains. The road soon began to climb the foothills and the city sank slowly into the deepening distance. The walking was not unpleasant, but the foothills (faint green and dotted with brush) grew steeper. The air was still and soft and spring-like.

The road was lonely and I had no guide to the house, but I trusted to the lines wherein he said,—

Be my reward some little place
To pitch my tent, some tree and vine
Where I may sit with lifted face,
And drink the sun as drinking wine.

I knew I had not reached the altitude which he would seek; there was not enough of the sky and the sea within the sweep of the eye.

I came at length to a little log hut which I recognized. It was almost the last house on the road.

I looked first at the four or five little cottages which stood in a row on the hillside amid a carefully terraced and abundantly watered fruit farm. The houses were hardly better than Dakota claim-shanties. Roses stood about, though it was Christmas week. Small olive and orange trees, trout ponds, beds of flowers, a team plowing in the background—these were the salient objects at first view.

Then I turned to the valley. Oakland lay below, flattened and remote, while afar in the haze of the western sun, across the bay where ferry-boats shuttled to and fro, San Francisco rose on its hill, and on the great Pacific, far beyond, shone sails of ships that seemed to pause and wait, indecisive and hesitating. It was a spot such as a poet would settle upon, a place of wide range and pure air.

At the door of one of the little houses the poet's mother, a wholesome, pleasing German type, met me. She told me her son was not at home. She asked me to make myself comfortable in the next little cottage till he came.

I walked about waiting for him, studying the landscape, feeling meanwhile the splendid attitude of this home. At last a man came walking up the road. He wore a rather large soft hat, and carried a light coat upon his arm. As he approached he reminded me of Whitman, though sterner and less patriarchal. His hair was turning gray and his beard was long. As he greeted me in offhand Western fashion, I looked into his quiet blue-gray eyes and liked him. He impressed me as a frank, simple soul of great strength.

When I told him my name, he seized me by the hand. "Boy! I'm glad to see you. Come in."

Holding me by the hand he half-dragged me into the cottage, which was plainly his workshop. The walls were covered with autographed letters, newspaper scraps, clippings from magazines and prints of the faces of his friends and correspondents. Besides these

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there were relics of his former life in the woods and mountains. A saddle hung in the corner, bearskins and wolfskins covered the chairs and lay as rugs on the floor. It was like a camp, the camp of a man of letters.

## XXXVIII

We were soon in the thick of talk. He refused, however, to allow me to talk Miller. He wanted to talk of other things. He would not allow me to bring up questions concerning his books, though he talked freely of his little ranch, and his plans for fruit growing. Little by little, however, he opened his deeper beliefs to me. He said he believed in more of individual freedom in living. He thought most families lived too close together, therefore in place of one large house he had built more small ones.

"In one my mother lives and keeps house. There we all eat. In this one I sleep and write, the third is my brother's and the fourth is for my guests."

He believed in the open air. His doors were never shut and he lived practically without fire the year round, a thing quite possible on that protected slope where the sun always fell.

"I took this piece of land when it was nothing but barren hillside, incredibly sterile. With my own hands I led the water down from the canyon. I terraced the hillsides, built stone walls, hollowed out trout ponds and planted orchards of olives and walnut trees. . . . I have a mile of roses," he ended with smiling pride.

He told me that his habit was to drive away at his writing all the forenoon, and in the afternoon to work with the man to whom he had given part of his plow-land in payment for his assistance about the orchard—much the same idea that Tolstoy had.

We ate supper in the tent-like dining room of his mother's cottage. He served in quiet, free hospitality and talked on about the great new world of liberty and equality which he saw coming.

After the meal we walked out to see his Italian chestnuts and his olives, and there I saw more of his mile of roses. His remarkable water supply was of great value and enabled him to have springs and fountains at most unexpected places. He took a boyish delight in showing them to me. One most notable fountain produced at a moment's notice a marvelous natural shower which fell upon the roof in musical roar. This device enabled him to sit under a fine shower in midsummer noons when all the rest of the land lay parched and choked in dust. It was a poet's thought and, like many another poet's thought, was both beautiful and practical.

Coming back to the house and wrapping ourselves in bearskins to keep off the chill, we talked of art and literature and altruistic living, while the shadows fell over the city below and the light was lifted from the sea. The longer I studied him, the more elemental and admirable he became and yet I saw how easily he could be misunderstood and caricatured.

He had no books about him, not even his own. He had ink and paper and manuscripts, but like Whitman and Riley and others of our nature group of poets and novelists, he had little need of a library. "I read a great deal, in the way of current literature, but my time is mainly given to creative work or to my orchard."

I pressed him at last to talk about himself. He told me a part of his life, sketching it in outline. He laughed at the recollection of the wild stories which still passed current with the uninformed. He looked grave when I said, "Why don't you let somebody straighten out the distortion which irresponsible paragraphers have twisted into your life?"

"Time will straighten it all out," he said at last, slowly. "My brother is in possession of the facts. He may tell the truth some day."

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His main peculiarities were associated with his love for the trails and the elemental life men live beneath the sky.

"I love the traditions of the woods and mountains," he said abruptly, with a sweep of his hand about the room, and my glance took in the saddle in the corner, the rugs upon the floor, and the tent-like roof.

He told me his doors were never locked and seldom shut, and the proof of it was in his attempt to close the door on my behalf. It was warped so strongly that it refused obstinately to shut out the air which seized upon me with disturbing vigor.

He glowed with delight as he described the owls which came at night to perch on a pole he had placed for them near his open door.

"There they sit," he said, "and peer and marvel at the man stretched on his bed within. I suppose they wonder why I should go to bed in the finest part of the day."

He knew all the birds that came about, and he took me into the orchard to show me a minute little lizard which a butcher-bird had impaled on a thorn. He showed me the pouches made of bearskin in which he had carried his revolvers and bags of gold dust in the youthful days when he rode the famous pony express. It was a wonderful thing to me to find this man high on the Oakland hills feeling the same wonderful upwelling spirit of human brotherhood which produced a *Progress and Poverty, News from Nowhere* and *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, which sent Father Huntington and Father McGlynn out among the miners and the slums, and put Tolstoy behind his plow.

He was at work on a metrical "Life of Christ", some parts of which he read to me. He also showed me the manuscript of a book in the spirit of Bellamy and Howells called *Building the City Beautiful* which I took to my Chicago publishers. I asked him to let me take a manuscript of his prose romance to show to Stone and Kimball.

As the lights of the city bloomed out of the vague masses which lay below us, we stood in the little cathedral-like door of his hut and looked down at the splendid garden of golden and sapphire lights—looked silently. It was too beautiful for words, and yet under this veil of mist, beneath this starry sparkle of lights, we knew that human wretchedness and sin and vice lay. We both felt this and were silent.

His belief was that if Christ were to return to this earth, He would not live in a great house in the roar of a city, attended by servants; it would be impossible for Him. He would live near to nature, would serve Himself or be served by those who loved Him. He would live simply, without greed or envy or reproach, and His action, if taken for example, would reform our whole society.

"The one positive law of God to man is this, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread'. All other laws are negative merely. If this law were absolutely carried out all inequality, all grinding toil, all the hurry and bitterness and insecurity of life here on earth would vanish."

The impression made upon me by this dreamer was very strong, and when I gripped his hand in good-bye, it was with that vague pain of parting which we feel at times when we take leave of men and women of kin nearer than blood relation, brothers and sisters in the deep currents of common thought and common action.

## XXXIX

To many readers the most interesting citizen in all Chicago in 1893 was Eugene Field, journalist and poet, who filled a column called "Sharps and Flats" in the *Daily News*. Coarse and hard as much of his writing was, Field had won distinction by a series of poems about children. "Little Boy Blue", "Wynken, Blynken and Nod" and others of similar vein had presented the mystical world of babyhood and thousands of parents were

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grateful to the author. He was one of the features of the city, and his house on Fullerton Avenue swarmed with visitors. He was in frequent demand as a dinner guest and on terms of intimacy with many of the business men in the Central West.

He had been in the city less than ten years, but in those years he had made his column an institution. It was only a mixture of jocose references to his distinguished friends, translations from Horace, pithy comment on public affairs and original rhymes, but it was held together by his singular personal quality. He was a renowned jester, an unscrupulous wag and the clubs were filled with stories of his pranks in Denver and St. Louis as well as in Chicago. His paragraphs were read by hundreds of thousands every day and the mention of his name provoked a smile.

No friend, however eminent, was quite sure of escaping the touch of his humor. There was no malice in any of his skits. They were just by way of making copy and having fun with his acquaintances at the same time. He pretended to scholarship and had many references to the "Amen Corner" of one of the big bookstores wherein he was accustomed to place such of us as he thought eligible. From time to time he quoted remarks as coming from Melville Stone, Dr. Frank Gunsaulus, Franklin Head and others of his "lay brothers". At times he commented on public events or reviewed a book or a play. In short, he was the first of "the colyumists". The Detroit *Free Press*, the Burlington *Hawkeye*, and the Danbury *News* had maintained their funny men who wrote occasional humorous sketches, but Field was the first man to conduct a daily column of verse and personal comment, which was essentially bookish if not literary, and *McClure's Magazine* realizing that here was another character with wide appeal like Riley, commissioned me to visit Field and to write another "real conversation" concerning his home and work. To this I readily agreed, for Eugene and I had already become something more than acquaintances, and I was certain he would lend himself to the task.

From my article which appeared in the magazine, August, 1893, I here quote some passages which have the advantage of being written on the spot and at the time.

"One afternoon quite recently, I sat in the attic study of one of the most interesting homes in Chicago, a home that is a museum of old books, rare bindings, Indian relics, dramatic souvenirs and bric-à-brac—all in indescribable confusion, yet each with a history. It was a beautiful June day and the window opened out upon a lawn shaded by large trees. It was a part of Chicago which the visitor seldom sees, green and restful and dignified, with the lake not far away to the east.

"My host was a tall thin-haired man of New England type. His face was of the Scotch mold, rugged, smoothly-shaven and generally very solemn, suspiciously solemn in expression. His infrequent smile curled his wide expressive mouth in fantastic grimaces which did not affect the steady gravity of his blue-gray eyes. He was stripped to his shirt sleeves and sat with his feet on a small stand, chewing reflectively on a cigar as he talked. His voice was deep-toned but rather dry in quality."

Such was Eugene Field as I saw him, essentially Yankee in face, form and habit—as characteristically American in his way as Joaquin Miller and Whitcomb Riley were in their ways. His was also a type of wide significance. Yankee as he appeared, he was in truth a native of St. Louis, but his parents were from Vermont and from his seventh to his nineteenth year he had lived in Amherst, Massachusetts. "When I was about nine years old," he said, "my father sent my brother and me to the old homestead where our mother lived. We stayed there seven months. My love for New England dates from that visit. I tell you, Garland, a boy's got to have a layer of country experience somewhere in him. Sooner or later a man rots if he lives too far away from the grass

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and the trees. I remember when I was about thirteen, a Vermont cousin said she'd give us a real Christmas tree, so Roswell and I went down into a neighboring swamp and dug up a little pine about as tall as ourselves and planted it in a tub. On Christmas night just when we were dancing around the decorated tree, Grandma looked in at us. 'Will this popery never cease!' she exclaimed, and out she flounced. New England was not strong on Christmas in those days. We planted that tree at the corner of Sunset Avenue and Amity Street and it's there now, a magnificent tree. Sometime when I am East, I am going up there with my brother and put a tablet on that tree—'Pause, busy traveller, and give a thought to the happy days of two Western boys who lived in Old New England; and make resolve to render the boyhood near you happier and brighter.'"

Something fine and tender came into his face and voice at this moment, something quite different from the spirit of his journalism.

His first piece of writing was a sermon. "I was nine years old at the time and being much chagrined to find I had no middle name like the rest of the boys, I took the name of Phillips, being a great admirer of Wendell Phillips, and my sermon was signed E. P. Field."

After his father died, he left Amherst and returned to the West—to Knox College, and later attended the State University at Columbia, Missouri. "Columbia was an old slave-owning town, but I liked it. I've got a streak of Southern feeling in me. I am by nature an aristocrat. I am a Horace, looking for a Mæcenas. I have mighty little in common with the wealthy, but wealth in the abstract pleases me."

## XL

He then told me that at twenty-one he came into an inheritance of sixty thousand dollars and he immediately set out for Europe, taking a young fellow of about his own age with him. "I had a lovely time," he said, a slow smile widening his mouth. "Just think of it! A boy of twenty-one without father and mother—and sixty thousand dollars! I just swatted the money around. When it gave out I came back to St. Louis and went to work on the *Journal*. I had to go to work, I was busted. I soon got to be city editor but I didn't like the routine of it. I liked to joke with people. I wanted my fun as I went along."

When I asked about his first work in verse, he brought his foot down to the floor with a bang. "There! I'm glad you said *verse*. Don't call my stuff poetry! I never do. From St. Louis I went to Kansas City as managing editor of the *Times*, then to the Denver *Tribune* where I stayed till 'eighty-three, at which time Melville Stone asked me to come to Chicago and work on the *News*."

His column was at once established and I was curious to know what gave rise to its name.

"I told Stone that as I intended to write a good deal about music, 'Sharps and Flats' seemed appropriate."

I spoke of his war on sham culture and this roused him, a deeper note came into his voice. "I hate a sham or a fraud—not so much a fraud, for a fraud very often means brains, but a sham makes me mad clear through."

"Some people say you've hurt Chicago art."

"I hope I have, so far as its bogus art is concerned. I've consistently jumped on the crowd of faddists but I have never willingly done a real man or woman an injury."

When I spoke of the alluring offers he had received from Eastern publishers, he replied, "Oh, yes, I've had them but I'm not going to accept them. Why should I? I'm in my element right here. They haven't any element in New York. They have 'atmosphere' but it's pretty thin sometimes. I don't want 'literary atmosphere'. I want to be in an *element*, something in which I can tumble around and yell without falling in a fit for lack of breath.

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I'm a newspaper man, I don't claim to be anything else. I never put a very high estimate on my work. That it is popular is due to the fact that my sympathies and those of the public happen to run on parallel lines just now. Not much of it will live."

Although agreeing with this estimate, I deprecated it by saying, "I think you underestimate some of your work. Your reminiscent boy-life poems and your songs of children are American and moving and will last".

A little farther along in our talk he said, "I hate logarithms. I like speculative astronomy. I am naturally a lover of romance. The present doesn't interest me—at least not taken as it is. I like it after some of you realists get through with it, but I don't care to deal with raw material myself. I like the archaic".

"Yes," I replied, "time helps you there. Time is a romancer, he haloes the fact, but we veritists find the present fact haloed by significance."

He mused on this. "Yes, time helps. My boyhood comes back to me, all of it sweet and fine somehow. I've forgotten the unpleasant things. I remember only the best of it. I like children. I like young men. I like the buoyancy of youth, and grass and trees. It's God's pity that every child can't have a taste of country life sometime."

When I spoke of the broadening effect which his knowledge of East and West had upon his work, he dryly remarked, "And it's also a big disadvantage. When I go East, Stedman calls me a typical Westerner, and out here they call me a Yankee."

Here I declared my faith in the West and especially in Chicago—"the city is swarming with artists and writers from all over the world. We have entered a new era. You are only forty-three. Your best work is before you".

"Yes, my serious work has just begun. I am a man of slow development but I know my faults and my weaknesses now. I'm getting myself in hand. I'm going to write a sentimental life of Horace. Scholars know mighty little about Horace but what I don't know I'll make up. I'll write such a life as he must have lived, the life we all live when boys."

In this curiously exotic note our conversation ended. For a Chicago journalist to be writing a life of Horace in this attic of a suburban cottage was quite as unexpected as the action of Joaquin Miller composing a metrical life of Christ in his little shack on Oakland Heights. The West was producing interesting characters if not great writers.

Field was naturally hospitable and in my later visits I usually found his house swarming with visitors, some of them casual callers, related to him by reason of a common love for junk, others were merely his neighbors toward whom he was kindly disposed.

He had many acquaintances among actors and actresses and they often ran out on Sunday. I recall meeting Francis Wilson there, also E. S. Willard, Bram Stoker and Robert Edeson. Eugene had a calmly assured air in entertaining his most distinguished guests but I think they liked him all the better for his confident poise. He was not a flatterer and he was not a lady's man. There was nothing gallant about him.

That he was greater as a personality than as an author, all his friends admit. His books have mostly faded out—only his child-poems remain. Very few remember what he wrote, but his sayings and especially his odd doings still linger in the minds of those who knew him and liked him.

## XLI

My belief in Chicago as a future literary center deepened with the growth of its World's Fair. At various times during the building of "The White City" I met Franklin Head, Melville Stone, Charles L. Hutchinson and other of its builders—men with decided literary and artistic sympathies—and at the Press Club I met Brand Whitlock, Will

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Payne, George Ade and other of its young newspaper men whose pens were celebrating the glories of the Exposition, and it was inevitable that I, catching the spirit of its boom, should decide to abandon my home in Boston and ally myself with the writers of the Central West. It was in this glow of confidence that I signed over to Francis Schulte, an aspiring young publisher, two of my books, *Prairie Folks* and *A Member of the Third House*. I believed that the Columbian Exposition marked the turning of the literary tide from East to West. I argued that the city by the lakes was the logical publishing center, the most economical place for printing and distributing books to the Middle-West. "Geographically it is the hub of the nation, as Boston is the hub of New England."

As I look back on it now, I can see that Chicago was only a huge country town, with less than a million people, an ugly, smoky, muddy town built largely of wood and without a single beautiful structure. Its great men were sons of villages, and its University had only a few mean buildings, although William Rainey Harper, its president, was undismayed. No one was more confident about it, with the exception, perhaps, of Charles Hutchinson, who was working with equal zeal in the cause of Art.

Lorado Taft, a sculptor and writer on art, was another of the esthetic prophets whose faith helped me to remove from Massachusetts to Illinois. He was a tall, black-bearded son of Illinois, whose five years in Paris had given him comparative ideas without robbing him of a loyal faith in his native state.

From the state university at Urbana, he had gone to Paris at an impressionable age, and had naturally absorbed all the prejudices for Grecian art, whereas with respect to painting he was inclined to celebrate the *plein air* school. Inevitably he and I fell to argument concerning our sculpture. He upheld the classic forms and I argued that Greek ideas had no place in our land. "Our sculpture, like our poetry and painting should be our own. I don't know exactly what its form should be, but as other nations have modelled in conformity with their daily life, so should we."

He withstood my assaults smilingly, insisting that coats and trousers as sculptural material were comical. "Our land is already peppered with cast-iron soldiers in badly fitting belted jackets and baggy pantaloons. I've made some of these effigies myself, I'm ashamed to say. Such sculpture may be 'significant' but it isn't beautiful. Sculpture should not illustrate life, it should only symbolize it."

There was truth in this, but I still held out that whatever we did must be original. "We should not, must not, imitate. There are forms of our life suitable for sculpture to the creative sculptor. Our pioneers, our red hunters, our horsemen, should furnish something to start with. We fictionists are doing work that belongs to the New World, you sculptors and architects must ultimately do the same. Take these Exposition buildings for example. They are for the most part imitations in wood and plaster of Greek temples, beautiful in themselves but wholly unrelated to America."

Taft admitted this. "They are derivative, but they have immense cultural effect, that has been proven. Isn't it better to have a beautiful example of classic art than a bungled attempt at what you would call original art?"

"No; it is better to bungle than to slavishly imitate. We learn by trying."

In some such discussion we spent many hours of his valuable time. I wonder that he didn't lose patience and show me to the door. In truth he was not nearly so conservative as his talk. Sensitive to the forms and faces which surrounded him, his Old World conventions were already giving way. Wild animals did not attract him, neither did the cowboy nor the Sioux warrior, but certain types of workers took the place of French peasants. In modelling the female

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figures for his fountains "The Great Lakes" he drew upon the women about him, making it, as Brander Matthews said, "entirely American as well as beautiful".

## XLII

The finest of all the Chicago writers of that day was Henry B. Fuller, who had won high praise with two books of European travel, *The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani* and *The Châtelaine of La Trinité,* romances as far from ramshackle Chicago as any works by an American author could possibly be. The mid-West owned in him a stylist of Continental rank and quality, but few knew it. I didn't know it—then. Deep in a fight for "veritism" I had little patience with Fuller's leisurely romances of travel and hence, during my first year in Chicago, he and I walked our separate ways—"he havin' his opinion of me and me havin' my opinion of him". To him I was a rude anarch of the prairie, preaching a subversive social and literary creed; whereas he, to my thinking, was a literary trifler who despised his native town and wasted valuable time dreaming of French châteaux and Italian castles. As a recent adopted citizen of Chicago, I resented his hypercritical attitude unable to perceive that Fuller's fine art was precisely what the West most needed as a counterpoise to its tasteless journalism. I went about saying that an aspiring use of local color was of more value than a derivative romance no matter how exquisite.

"We must have fiction as new in design as our skyscrapers," I repeated, and then quite unexpectedly Fuller took me at my word and published a novel which had the definition of a steel tower wherein all of the characters were connected in one way or another with the newest of our architectural monstrosities. He called his novel *The Cliff Dwellers* and I, recognizing that he had beaten the realists at their own game, at once wrote to him acknowledging the art as well as the truth of the book, a letter which drew from him a reply so characteristic and so intellectually arrogant, that it should be read at this point.

"My dear sir"; (he began with cool aloofness)

"I have to thank you for yours of the seventeenth in regard to *The Cliff Dwellers.* The book is to be taken really as a sort of wrist exercise" (observe the implication of this) "preparatory, perhaps, to something better in the future. At the same time, I have no fixed literary creed; on the other hand I experience now and then a disposition not to use the same model too many times running. I am equally indebted to Mr. Howells and Mr. Boyeson, as well as yourself, for a generous welcome." (Here he felt that he had gone too far in compliance and checked himself, adding a contemptuous qualification.) "There are a good many ways to skin a cat, and the realistic way, I dare say, is as good a way as any.

"I shall take pleasure in meeting you here next month.

"Yours very truly,
"H. B. FULLER."

In this fashion we began an acquaintance which was to ripen into friendship. That he was the best informed man of all my acquaintance in Chicago was evident although he made no display of his acquirements. He said little and his sentences were short, precisely controlled and pertinent. He had little patience with fuzzy pretentiousness. Intellectually arrogant but never bitter, he worked away on the book to which he had alluded and when it came out I found in it a mellower quality than I had hitherto believed him to possess.

Masterly in the precision of its phrase, its characterizations and its humor, *With the Procession* in my judgment ranks with *A Modern Instance* and *The Rise and Fall of Silas Lapham.* It was cosmopolitan in its technique. It made all other stories of Chicago seem raw and crude.

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Here was a novelist after my own rules! Choosing a local subject, Fuller brought to bear upon it a literary technique which could be matched only by the best French or English masters.

I am writing this paragraph thirty-five years after the publication of the book, and at the close of a fifth or sixth reading of it, and it still appears to me a delightful historical document. Social Chicago in the 'nineties lies in these pages, more perfectly preserved than in any other story then or since. It is a transcript of life as Fuller saw it and lived it. It has humor, understanding and a nipping irony. The author not only knew his material, he had shared it. Born in Chicago when it was a small town, just before the Civil War, he had grown up with it, and in this story he had put much that was family history and something that was intimately autobiographic, how much I have never been able to define.

Like myself, he had little to do with the journalists of the city, but *With the Procession* brought him many new admirers, among them several artists with whom, like myself, he found something congenial. We met often in the studios of Lorado Taft, Ralph Clarkson, Bessie Potter, Charles Francis Browne and Herman MacNeil. If my readers wish to know how these groups appeared to him, they will find that concept in *Under the Skylights,* for there he depicted the artist colony with the quiet authority of a master. We are all there, reflected in his shrewd and laughing eyes. He liked us but he measured and weighed us. He was at once American and European.

Some of us knew that he had what the old town needed, comparative concepts of art and life, but for the average citizen Eugene Field remained the city's "big" character. His work—that of a newspaper jokesmith—was congenial, while Fuller, who saw the city from the standpoint of a cultivated Old-World traveller, was an irritation. At a time when writers from Madison and Peoria were awed by the palaces, jewels and servants of the newly rich, Fuller turned on them the light of his educated, critical eyes. He knew Mrs. Bates and Malvina Woode-Shedd. They had been friends of his father. He knew that Malvina, despite her mansion with its "period" rooms and "old masters", was only the fine wholesome daughter of a neighbor and that she assumed the airs of a duchess in public but sang in private the songs of her girlhood, finding comfort in the little old-fashioned chamber she had built above the gorgeous gold and brocade of her "Looey Kans" drawing room. To my Rose of Dutchers Coolly, Mrs. Bates was an awe-inspiring aristocrat, but to Fuller she was just Susan Wood, whom he had known as a girl in his Sunday School class during the Civil War.

His true and entirely sympathetic treatment was appreciated only by a few. Those who wished to think of these manufacturers from Racine, these grain merchants from Des Moines, these bankers from Akron as romantic aristocrats, dukes and earls of commerce, were not interested in Fuller's humorous estimate of them. He wrote as a cosmopolitan, not as a journalist. In his stories were no scandals, elopements or melodramatic business battles and in consequence his fine work counted for little with a sensation-loving public. He came and went unnoticed by anyone except the very small group with which he occasionally met.

Furthermore, he stood aside from all the up-building artistic schemes which Taft and I originated and glowingly promoted. He refused to claim more for our community than it possessed, and he continued his merciless criticisms of its pretensions and its boasting. He admitted but grudgingly the progress which all the others of us insisted upon acclaiming.

In this advance I came to understand and to share, but I was always a year or two behind him. I remained the hopeful boomer, the vibrant promoter of "Western art and Western literature" as late as 'ninety-eight, at

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a time when Fuller, more aloof, more critical than ever, would not spare any mid-West writing or painting because it was indigenous. In *Under the Skylights* he made game of me and my boyish plans for "advancing Western art".

Perverse as he was—and he could be incredibly perverse—we all welcomed him as a guest and his merry laugh was often heard in the circles wherein he felt most at ease, but it would not do to count upon him. If he thought we were involving him too deeply he failed to turn up, or if he came he soon vanished. None of us had ever been inside his home. We understood that he had a room in his mother's house on the South Side, but he could not be reached by telephone, and no one presumed to call upon him. Sometimes when bored by our talk, he disappeared for weeks altogether and no questioning when he reappeared afforded any clue to his whereabouts.

He was withal a "puritan". He did not drink or smoke or swear and like Howells he used slang only with quotation marks. He was essentially of New England and often alluded to his ancestor, the Reverend Samuel Fuller of early Colonial history.

## XLIII

In spite of all that I have said, Henry's sympathies were wide and his interest in his friends sincere. There was nothing shadowy about his alert figure and all-seeing eyes, and his knowledge of his region was kept up by the most minute and constant study. He knew the boundaries of every park, and the size and character of every addition. He spent many days wandering through ugly West Side streets or surveying raw suburban developments, a small lonely figure walking swiftly along weed-grown avenues. He ate in all kinds of places, usually in such cheap and noisy restaurants as happened to be convenient. Fastidious in the highest degree as a writer and critic, he cared very little apparently for nicety of surroundings or service, but this may have been from the need of saving his money. That he had no adequate returns from his books we all knew, but of his patrimony we had no definite knowledge.

We discussed his peculiarities endlessly but loved him all the more because of them. He was "Henry B" among us. His oddity, his perversity delighted us. We sometimes laid bets as to whether or not he would turn up at an important studio dinner or tea. For all our group he remained a mystery, a familiar presence but a mystery nevertheless. Harriet and Lucy Monroe, who had known him for years, and Irving and Allen Pond with whom he was most intimate, could tell us little about his family life. He occasionally spoke of his mother to me, but alluded to his youth only in general terms, and I carefully refrained from asking questions. The only time I saw him in his family relation was after his mother's death. Although not definitely invited, I went to the funeral service in the family home, and Henry seemed touched by my consideration. The Fuller home was a spacious old-fashioned place, plainly the home of transplanted New Englanders, without grace but dignified and comfortable.

The death of his mother threw upon Henry the management of the estate, which (we understood, from an occasional remark) included a number of tenement houses and small shops. This property became a burden. He ceased to write and became plumber, furnace-man, janitor and agent. He lost something of the joyous irresponsibility which had delighted us. He had periods of depression in which he admitted that he could not write and do roofing and carpenter work at the same time, and yet something of that quality we call "New England conscientiousness" kept him collecting rents. So far as we could discover little remained for his own use. I considered him an unpaid drudge but he never admitted this.

He dressed like a man who could afford

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only the cheapest and most durable apparel. When he went to the theater or opera he sat in cheap seats, unless some of his rich admirers could induce him to occupy a seat in their box, which they often did. I never knew him to give a dinner and the only luncheon of his providing was given in honor of Howells when he came to Chicago to lecture, but he was punctilious and generous about wedding presents, and at Christmas time he bought bravely. Certain things he would not do, that was known to us all. He would not spend money carelessly. He carried himself like a man with a fixed income within which he must keep.

He had a fine resonant voice and could have been a success as a lecturer, but he refused all invitations to speak, whether because of his small stature or because of his characteristic perversity, none of us could tell. That he could speak competently and with charm he proved by giving a talk on Goldoni at Anna Morgan's dramatic studio as introductory to her production of *The Fan*. This address was a delight. Its precision, its humor, its knowledge made it valuable as literature, and as I listened I imagined it in print in some magazine. But in this I failed to reckon on his perversity. He spoke from notes pencilled on small sheets of paper, and these, as fast as he used them, he rolled into pellets and threw upon the floor. I felt like calling out, "Here! Stop that!" but I didn't. I sat still and watched that delightful essay fall into a flock of minute paper wads upon the floor! That was Fuller at his best and worst.

The Maeterlinck craze gave him another opportunity for satire, and in a book called *The Puppet Booth* he had fun with symbolism. He did no more work of the weight and quality of *With the Procession*. He hadn't the time, but he continued to influence us all by his laconic comment. He was always lucidly brief. He represented the Old World and the future in much that he said. He looked at us and at Chicago not so much as a European would, but as the future citizen would. He was never bitter in his criticism but he saw things in something like their proper places and proportions. One by one I attained his positions until at last we were in substantial agreement, although I never quite took on his hopeless philosophy.

It is probable that my wife and I knew as much concerning his peculiarities and perversities as any one outside his own family, for he often visited us in the country as well as in the city, and for three summers he occupied our flat in New York. His visits to the country were short, for to him the song of the robin was a "yelp" and the voice of the katydid a "snore". He detested rural noises and complained that he could not sleep after the birds began their "tumult". He carried wads of cotton batting with which to defend his auditory nerve against the cackle of hens and the crowing of roosters. When I asked "what about the clatter of the milk wagon and the roar of elevated trains?" he replied, "Oh, they are the natural sounds of the morning. It is the 'infernal din' of springtime frogs and birds that drives me distracted".

He loved cities and never lost his interest in them. He knew everything that was going on in New York as well as in Chicago. He inspected every new building in Washington and while in our flat made daily explorations of Manhattan.

All his spare time was spent bent above books, and he remembered what he read. This made him impatient of careless blunderers like myself. His statements were clear-cut and exact while mine were blurred and only partly true. Once as I came upon him in the Newberry Library, I said, "What are you reading now?" Taking off his glasses to wipe his tired eyes, he replied, "I've been posting up on the relative size and gunpower of the various navies".

This was characteristic of him. If anything interested him, he straightway went to the library and informed himself on that subject in all its details. He knew the history of

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Florence, but so he did that of Savannah and Charleston. Once when he came to visit us in West Salem, the County Fair flared forth a block or two below us. Fuller was alert with interest. Early the next morning he started out precisely as if he were visiting Naples. He spent all the forenoon gravely surveying fat hogs, panting sheep and other farm exhibits, and in the afternoon with equal care he passed in review the "spatter work", the preserves and other exhibits of "Domestic Hall". At the end of the day he knew more about the show than any other visitor, and ten times as much as I. We laughed at him (and with him) over this meticulosity of interest, for he saw the humor of it, but as I was busy at my desk he felt he should improve the hour, "and besides, the Fair is there to be studied", he added.

I must not end this brief characterization (he will come into my story many times) without repeating my statement that he was a most desired guest at all our feasts. He could be companionable and he usually was delightfully gay and wittily candid. We never left him out. He was indispensable to every party or project and when he appeared a shout would go up, "Here comes Henry B." and then in the midst of the evening some one would say, "Where's Fuller?" only to find that he had slipped away, back into the lonely region whence he came.

## XLIV

Another of the city's esthetic evangelists was young Herbert Stone, son of my helpful friend Melville Stone, head of the Associated Press. Herbert, while still a student at Harvard, had secured from me the right to bring out a new edition of *Main-Travelled Roads* along with a companion volume of verse, to be called *Prairie Songs*, and late in 1893 these books appeared in such quality of print and binding as no other publisher employed. They marked a new era in the making of American books.

Up to this time publishing firms had given little thought to the finer points of print and binding. All novels were without adornment and most of them were poorly printed. Stone and Kimball, with the rashness of youth, set out to make books which should be at once tasteful and serviceable. Herbert who had studied printing in France, England and Germany, had a keen appreciation for type (accuracy in proofreading was less important), and he was especially the artist in all matters relating to decoration and design. He printed my books on hand-made paper, and bound them in green silk with three golden cornstalks on back and sides. Furthermore he advertised a special numbered edition on larger paper, and clothed in buckram, at ten dollars a set! Amazed and uplifted by the glory in which my Cinderellas were attired I thought hopefully of their future till the returns began to come in, then my glow of confidence faded into gray. The public would not buy my books even when robed in tasteful splendor. The young firm lost money on them, although the numbered edition sold. Very little royalty from any of the books came to me.

The truth is Stone and Kimball were ahead of their time. They were pioneers in an uncultured field. Herbert also edited and published the first "magazinelet" in America, calling it the *Chap Book*, an exquisitely printed, neatly edited booklet, which had an influence, vastly disproportionate to its size, for it brought to our sprawling town a new concept, the minutely esthetic as opposed to the huge and commonplace. It introduced to me the work of Bernard Shaw, Israel Zangwill, Aubrey Beardsley, Max Beerbohm and many others who regularly wrote for it. It proclaimed neatness, order, wit and beauty. In short, it was a fastidious cosmopolitan guest in a throng of farmers' sons and daughters.

No one needed the *Chap Book* preachment more than I. I recall Herbert saying paternally, "You started right, Mr. Garland, but you've gone wrong. You're a bit of the

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preacher where you should be only the artist. The *Arena* was all very well for a time, but you need a different kind of publishing now".

He was right. My reforming zeal had led me astray. I was too much the exhorter. Easing up on my economic propaganda, I applied myself unreservedly to my work as novelist and literary historian. I not only gave Stone and Kimball the rights to my veritistic essays, *Crumbling Idols,* but contracted to let them have a novel on which I was at work, for in doing this I was not only gaining a different audience, an audience of beauty-lovers, but helping, as I believed, to build up the book-making art in Chicago.

On the poetic side the city was deplorably weak. Stupendous as the dreams of its builders were, they had failed to inspire or develop their poets. Miss Harriet Monroe stood almost alone in her brave attempt at interpretation. Her ode, which was officially heard at the opening of the Exposition, had made her the chief versifier of the region, but her work was too classical to win wide acceptance in the midst of the whoop and halloo of journalistic comment. She and Eugene Field represented opposite poles of the poetic globe.

Among the reporters who won distinction during the Fair was the author of a column called "Stories of the Street and of the Town", a series of sketches quietly humorous and keenly observant, written in clear concise phrases with no false strokes. These sketches, which were illustrated by outline drawings signed "McCutcheon", interested me, and upon inquiry I learned that they were the work of two young Hoosiers, George Ade and John McCutcheon, graduates of the same University, who had recently come to town. Both were tall, slender, pale and rather serious—as became humorists. They hunted in a pair and I often met them during the summer, and liked them both. Ade was singularly laconic, and McCutcheon seldom uttered a word. The work they did was so characteristic, so true and so amusing that I called Mr. Howells's attention to it. For years he read everything that Ade published, and often praised him. "His work is native to the soil and without a trace of imitation," he once said to me.

Each day something characteristic of Chicago life appeared over Ade's signature. He had the faculty of seeing delightful comedy in the doings of ordinary people. He caught the current slang of the day as no one else had done, and when Stone and Kimball brought out a small volume of his stories under the title *Artie* (the name of the principal character, a clerk in an office), it was instantly successful. It was new, clean and characteristic of the day. *Fables in Slang* continued to be his chief work and are, in their way, historical records, just as Edward Townsend's *Chimmie Fadden* embodied a certain phase of New York's East Side life.

At the same time, Peter Finley Dunne was creating his Mr. Dooley, an Irish philosopher who made daily comment in the *Evening Post,* on all subjects which interested him. His shrewdness and humor soon won for him a national reputation. Sitting in his saloon on Halstead Street, Dooley addressed his remarks to a friend, Mr. Hinnissey, who was always "seein' b' the paa-pers" that this or that man or woman was pretending to be thus or so. The dialect was phonographically correct but the structure of the sentences and the wisdom of the satire was Peter Dunne.

I seldom met Dunne in Chicago and only twice after he left Chicago, but I felt in him the sombre temperament of the Celt, a sadness of outlook, a fatalistic philosophy curiously at variance with his writing, and directly opposed to Ade and Field. His success took him to New York but Ade, after writing a successful play, retired to a farm in Indiana. He once said to me (this was before automobiles had overrun the earth), "I want to own a farm with a herd of Percheron colts galloping over it". Whether or not the tractor destroyed his dream, I do not know, but I fear it did.

(*To be continued*)

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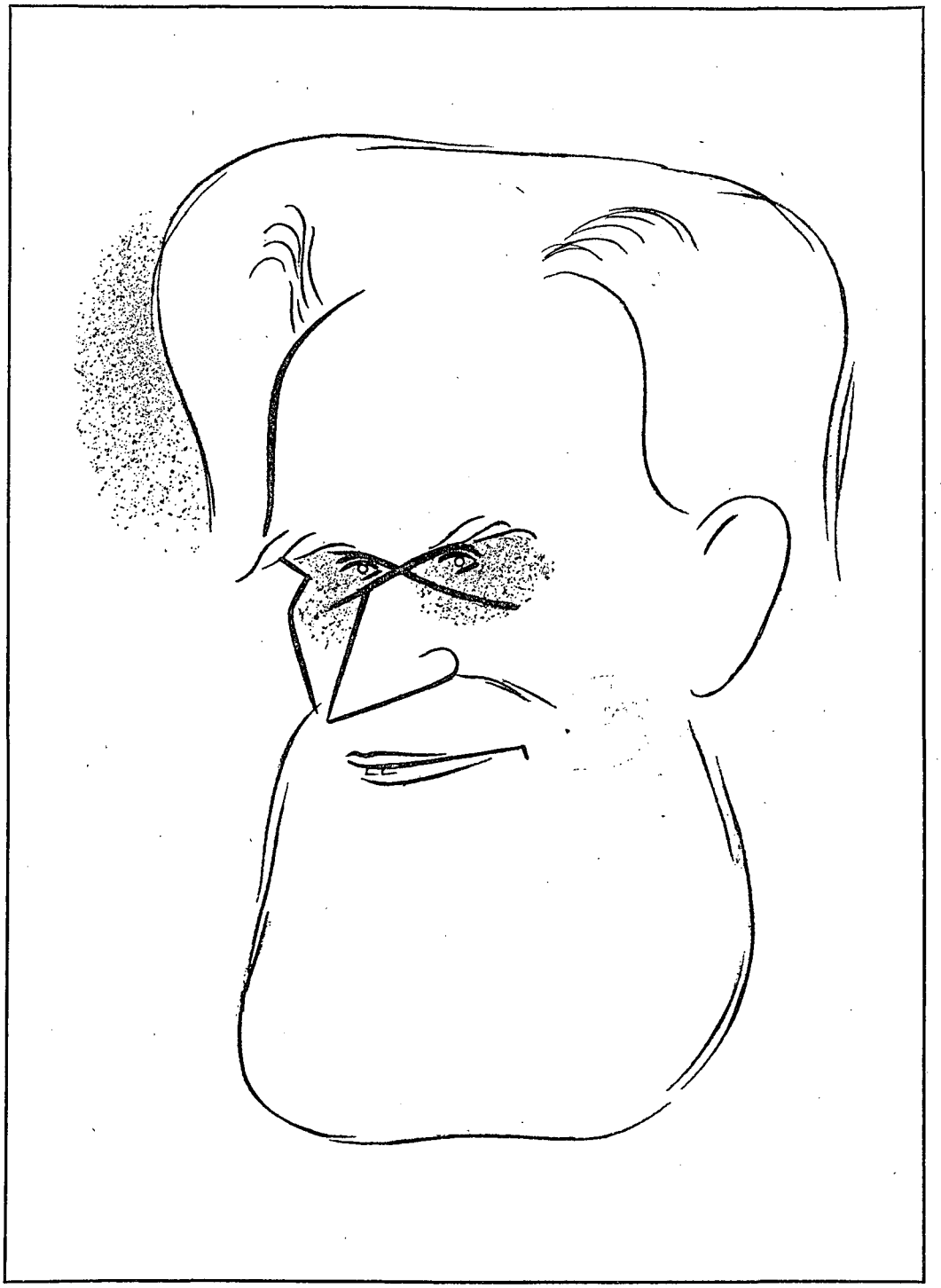

HAVELOCK ELLIS

*Caricature by Eva Herrmann*

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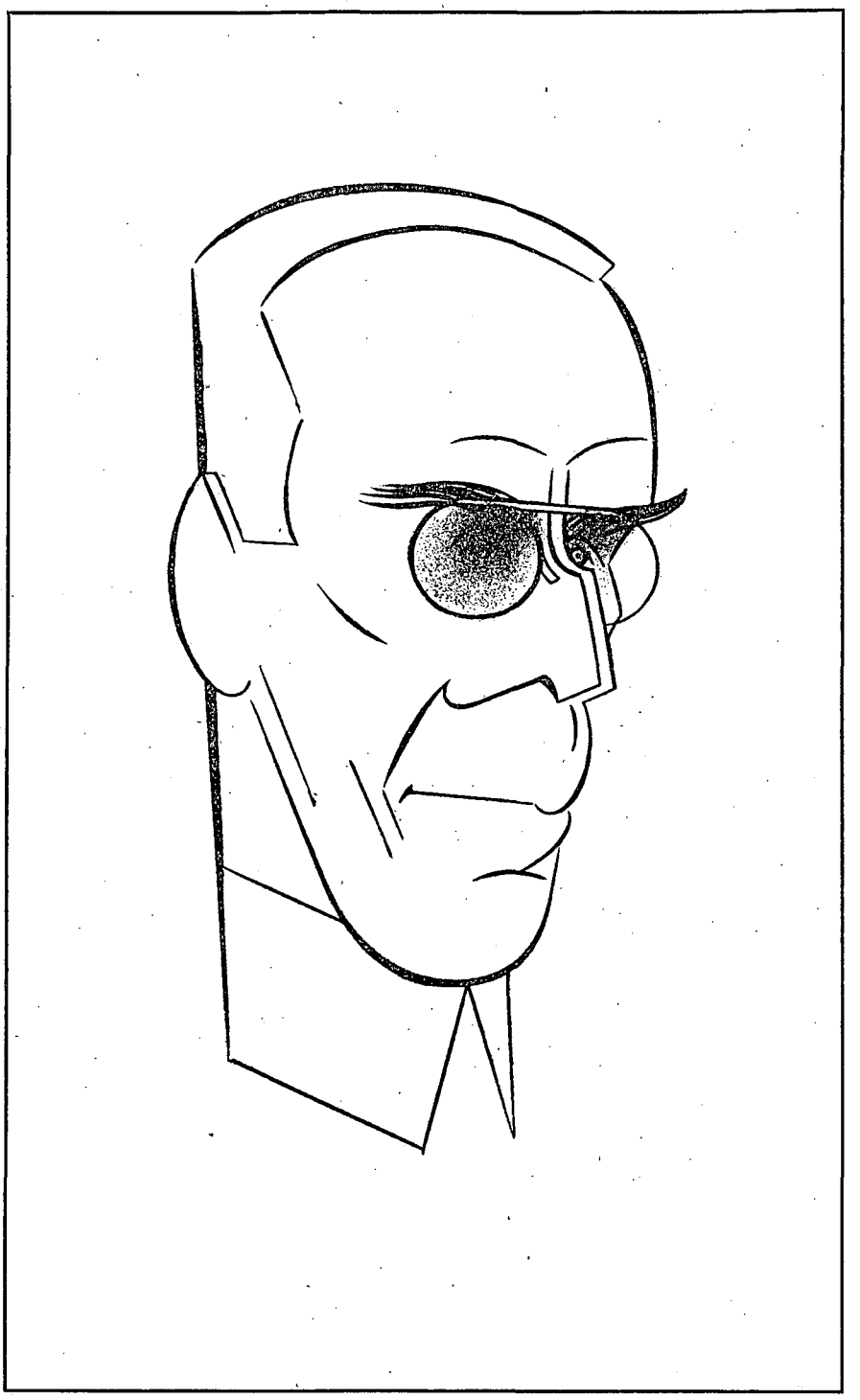

WARWICK DEEPING

*Caricature by Eva Herrmann*

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# CHRONICLE AND COMMENT

INFLAMMATORY TOPICS.—Two things, it appears, are not permitted in contemporary literary criticism: to attack Ernest Hemingway or to defend censorship. When Robert Herrick did both in his article "What Is Dirt?" (November BOOKMAN), abuse was promptly piled on him and on THE BOOKMAN by an unprecedented number of correspondents and editorial writers. Some commentators, to be sure, expressed the highest praise and gratitude. But most of the comments were inspired by a mingling of rage as at a crime and horror as at a sacrilege.

Since we favor censorship and think that Hemingway has not had sufficient adverse criticism, Mr. Herrick's article seems to provide a good occasion for some remarks on both subjects. But first we ought to make it clear that we are not in entire agreement with Mr. Herrick, and that on at least two points he seems to us to have been unfair. In "What Is Dirt?", you will remember, Mr. Herrick compared the war-time realism of two books which had just suffered at the hands of the Massachusetts censorship laws, Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. The German book he found to be literature, the American book "it would not be too strong to call mere garbage". He maintained that in causing deletions in *All Quiet* the censor had done great harm, whereas "no great loss to anybody would result if *A Farewell to Arms* had been suppressed".

We will defer for a moment the question of censorship, which as a matter of fact Mr. Herrick did not treat in any detail, using it principally, as in the above quotation, as a stick to beat Hemingway; the Remarque book, on the other hand, he uses as a stick with which to beat the Massachusetts censors. Of the two kinds of passages Mr. Herrick gave as illustrations—those objected to as disgusting and those objected to as immoral—we cannot agree with his findings in the first. The two books seem to us to be on a par in brutality and frankness—equally justifiable, equally disgusting. In each case there is vivid description of revolting scenes, bringing the war before one in horrible clarity. If one book should be called garbage, we think the other should also; and if one deserves the title of literature, so does the other. Our opinion is that neither book deserves either word, each being a powerful document of contemporary life rather than a contribution to literature. But judging by literary merit alone, *A Farewell to Arms* would seem to have a larger claim than *All Quiet*. It is difficult to imagine ever finding interest in another book by Remarque; it is difficult to imagine finding any book by Hemingway not interesting.

The use of the word *garbage* is one place in which Mr. Herrick was unfair, not only to Hemingway, but to Owen Wister, to whom he ascribed the word. Mr. Wister had indeed applied the word to Hemingway's work but in such a way as to result in a compliment. This is from his comment on *A Farewell to Arms*: "He has got rid of those jolty Western Union ten word sentences which he overdid at times, and also of that monotony which came of dealing too much in human garbage. This book is full of beauty and variety, and nobody in it is garbage".

Mr. Herrick was hardly fair, again, in jumping to conclusions about the book's hero from reading a review, after declining to finish the book himself. The result was that he used the hero's desertion from the Italian



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*Photograph by Mme. Yevonde, London*

REBECCA WEST

THE BOOKMAN'S *European correspondent, whose new novel, a London fantasy, is entitled "Harriet Hume".*

army as a criticism of the moral quality of the book's leading characters, when as a matter of fact the desertion as given is made justifiable or at least defensible.

A number of those who came down on Mr. Herrick blamed him for writing at all about a book he had not read to the end. With this we cannot agree, since he made it perfectly clear just how far he had read and, with the exception of the sentence about the desertion, commented only on the part with which he was familiar. In fact we think credit is due to Mr. Herrick for discerning in the early pages of *A Farewell to Arms* the weakest part, not only of that book, but of all of Hemingway's work. The affair of the book's two principal characters, Frederick Henry, the American driver of an Italian ambulance, and Catherine Barclay, the Scotch nurse on the Italian front, has been greeted by most

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reviewers and, doubtless, most readers, as "the love conceived in the muck of war which evolves into beauty", to quote from the publishers' blurb. There is every reason to think that Hemingway thought thus of his story, or at least wanted it to give that effect. Most of the squeals occasioned by Mr. Herrick's article were directed at his saying "Mr. Hemingway's young man and woman are but another couple on the loose in Europe during the war—there were so many of them!" And again, that their affair "is merely another lustful indulgence, like so many that occur between men and women and have since the beginning of time and will persist to its end. It has no significance, no more than what goes on in a brothel".

Here, we submit, Mr. Herrick's judgment is far sounder than that of those who have accepted the central relations of *A Farewell to Arms* as a "beautiful love", an "idyll", and so on. Several critics have pointed out that Frederick and Catherine are less vivid and real than several minor characters in the book, but they do not seem to have pushed their analysis to the point of realizing what the leading pair actually are in relation to each other: embodiments of passion in an erotic fantasy. The central theme of the book is the story of a Scotch nurse made irresponsible by heartbreak and an American soldier apparently irresponsible by nature going on an irresponsible honeymoon and getting away with it. That is the level at which the story was conceived and written, and that is its appeal: a daydream of extreme erotic indulgence divorced from the other normal human emotions and untouched by the normal difficulties and retributions. You will notice that the circumstances are carefully chosen to permit concentration on an exclusively erotic relation: the beautiful, passionate heroine, slightly hysterical and wholly devoted to being a perfect mistress; the handsome, strong, brave hero, a gallant officer in the service of a foreign army, a popular he-man with men and promptly adored by women; a foreign country, and a foreign country in the exceptional conditions of warfare; a wound just sufficient to confine the hero without crippling him, while the heroine's occupation of nurse provides the circumstances ascribed by Shaw to marriage: "the maximum of temptation combined with the maximum of opportunity"; the absence of responsibilities but the constant excitement of danger; a relation outside the law and almost entirely divorced from any other human contacts, the few friendships being superficial and gradually eliminated until the

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

*the American poet, story-teller, and insurgent critic, with whom Rebecca West crosses swords in this issue on the subject of James Joyce.*

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NANCY HOYT

couple is in complete isolation; and so on—in short, all the familiar methods of the romantic thriller.

It is true, as will be urged, that the story ends dismally with the death of the girl and her baby, and that the final scene is one of concentrated pathos. But this in no way conflicts with our description of the story as a dehumanized love story. Any other ending, in fact, would have broken the spell of the erotic fantasy and brought the affair into the realm of real life. And that realm is consistently avoided throughout. The book, that is to say, really has a happy ending. It is a "new kind" of happy ending, and the logical conclusion of the hard-boiled school of writing: the harrowing happy ending. You cry, but if you are in sympathy with the story you sigh with relief.

In thus describing the plot of *A Farewell to Arms* we are not necessarily condemning it or the author's intention. But it is certainly necessary to say that this is not the stuff of important writing. It is what is expected from writers who specialize in titillating the sophisticated, or rather the pseudo-sophisticated: the Michael Arlens, or, a few years ago, Robert Chambers and Elinor Glyn; the adroit concocters of thrills. At the same time, it should be promptly added that this aspect of Hemingway's work is but one of several and not the most conspicuous, even though it bulks large in *The Sun Also Rises* and forms the principal thread of the plot in this latest novel. We mention it at this length because it has been largely overlooked and because Hemingway is being praised for his very weaknesses. There is much else in *A Farewell to Arms* that comes from Hemingway the superb writer. The retreat from Caporetto, as everyone has recognized, is a masterly piece of reporting. The encampment scenes and the minor characters are presented with all of Hemingway's amazing observation, his unrivalled brilliance of dialogue, his delightful humor, his endless fecundity of revealing invention, his utterly convincing fidelity in reporting many kinds of activity—all the qualities for which Hemingway has won and deserved enthusiasm as the most striking talent in recent American writing.

To make our meaning clearer we will try to analyze the principal elements that have so far gone into Hemingway's work, which is richly variegated but at the same time extremely uneven. There are, we find, five Ernest Hemingways, which we list, beginning with those that deserve high praise and ending with those we deplore:

1. Hemingway the superb story writer in the tradition of George Ade, O. Henry, Ring Lardner; what might be called the up-from-journalism school, distinguished by shrewd observation, realistic conversation, rich humor, homely pathos and sentimentalism, mild satire, unexpected turns and endings.

2. Hemingway the brilliant reporter of adventurous callings and out-of-the-way characters: bull-fighters, soldiers, boxers, pros-

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titutes, gangsters, and so on. In this the predecessors to whom he is most akin are Stephen Crane, Richard Harding Davis, Jack London, excelling all of them in range of subject as well as range of mood.

3. Hemingway the reporter of the post-war period, particularly of Americans in Europe. This is the vein for which he is best known, though here his work has less literary excellence than in the first two manners and owes its reputation to the accident of capturing a widespread but transient and essentially trivial mood. Do you remember the opening sentence of the first sketch in Hemingway's first book?—"Everybody was drunk." This is (or, shall we say, was) the "Everybody was drunk" school of writing.

4. Hemingway the recorder of grand passions in the manner of Michael Arlen as described above. We neglected to mention one advantage which Hemingway and his contemporaries have over their predecessors: they are enabled to add an extra fillip to their romances by setting them in the war, because of the unusual frankness which is allowed in war books. If you say "You mustn't be so crudely outspoken", you are answered, "I suppose you think our soldier boys didn't do such things". Just as, in the reporting of warfare, if you say "That strong language isn't necessary", the reply is "I suppose everybody's manners were perfect on the retreat from Caporetto". That may not be much in the line of logic, but it seems to work, and the fact remains that war books are permitted extreme license. The fact also remains that, in Isabel Paterson's words, such language isn't realism, it's paprika.

LLEWELLYN POWYS AND JOHN COWPER POWYS

*photographed with their cousin, Father Cowper Johnson (center), in Patchin Place, New York.*

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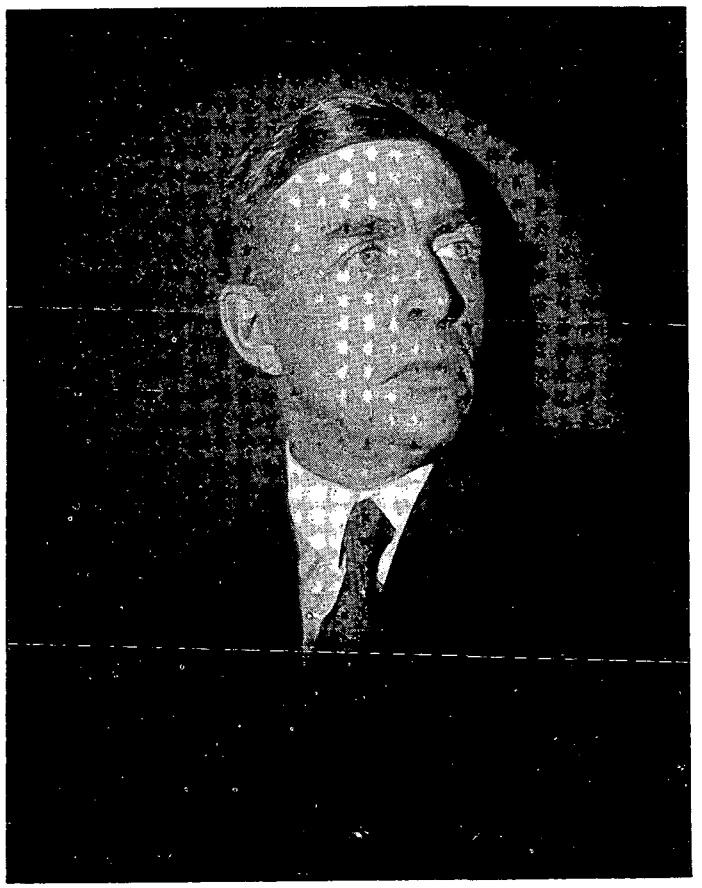

WILLIAM BOLITHO

*the English journalist now in this country writing for the New York "World", and author of "Twelve Against the Gods".*

*Photograph by Sherril Schell*

5. Hemingway the Left Bank art-writer. Hemingway has so much native brilliance as a writer that it is difficult—as well as thankless—to separate the good writing from the bad. But throughout his books the fine writing is almost inextricably mingled with the most self-conscious tricks of style and deliberate mannerisms. He has from the first, for instance, been one of the hardest workers of the vein of "illiterate" writing opened by Gertrude Stein—a manner of writing in which notable stories can be done, as Miss Stein and Sherwood Anderson and Hemingway have shown, but which remains a crippling artificiality. The brief staccato sentences, the tiny colloquial vocabulary, the illogical "and"-sentences, the omitted punctuation, the sedulous naïveté and the other devices by which "This is not literature, but life" is registered, are effective when used by an adroit writer, but the effectiveness is the trivial one of novelty; one's mind is still attuned to normal traditional writing and this "not-writing" piques it for the moment as one's ear might be caught by a clever boy beating sticks while an orchestra played.

This style of writing has been present in Hemingway's work from the beginning, and seems to correspond to a natural inclination. But in going through his books chronologically one discovers the alarming fact that he has been cultivating the tricks instead of discarding them. There are whole stories in *In Our Time* which are almost, if not quite, "straight" writing—for instance, "Big Two-Hearted River", a story the author has never surpassed. But each book contains progressively more of Hemingway's particular de-

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velopment of Steinese, until in *A Farewell to Arms* it becomes a serious burden to the reader in a preponderance of the *narrative* parts of the book; the dialogue, as always, is masterly, and some narrative sections, notably the retreat scene, are comparatively free. In general it must be said that Hemingway's narrative style has steadily deteriorated until it is now the worst of any widely acclaimed writer. (Genuine illiteracy, as in the case of Dreiser, is far easier to bear than affected illiteracy which has lost the appeal of novelty.) The droning beat of endless bald declarations, the maddening succession of "and"-sentences, the unvarying monotone, the piling on of needless details, the eccentric punctuation, render whole sections nearly unreadable. One finds oneself skimming pages for the sentences which put the action forward.

Worse even than this, Hemingway has in this latest book begun to imitate Gertrude Stein in her other vein, that of the cuckoo passages of repetitious, echolalic nonsense. He drops into this horror on several occasions, generally to hint at matters which it would be illegal to state explicitly. To be sure, this is making an intelligible use of Miss Stein's manner, which is more than she has ever done herself; but that hardly seems sufficient justification. . . . It is a pity, when one is reading a superlative story or chapter making some portion of the world today more vivid than any other American writer could do, to be pulled up by the intrusion of imitations of the aborted experiments of misguided esthetes, so that one is for the moment tempted to dismiss the whole business as Thunder on the Left Bank.

We regret that the impression which must remain from devoting so much space to the two aspects of Hemingway's work which we dislike should be so negative. But as we stated at the beginning, it was our purpose to emphasize the points in which Hemingway has been either mistakenly praised or insufficiently criticized. For the rest, we are glad to concur with almost all of the laudatory comments that have been lavished on his work. While reading most of him this prayer to the muse constantly springs to our lips: "Please let Ernest Hemingway go on writing like that forever". To go on like that would be sufficient, but it is more likely that Hemingway will transcend himself. The very parts of his work that seem to us the most faulty are the result of a fine ambition. If he revealed limitations when he essayed a great love story, the attempt shows that he is not content with the lesser triumphs he could so easily repeat. Even the unfortunate tricks of style come from a serious, studious grappling with his art that is far superior to that of most writers today. Hemingway's career has only begun, and begun so strikingly that almost anything may be expected.

LORNA MOON

*Whose best-selling "Dark Star" was hailed as one of the most remarkable first novels of recent years.*

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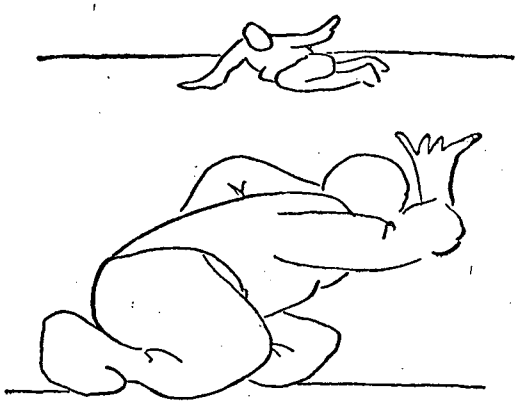
CENSORSHIP.—As we have said, Mr. Herrick did not discuss the question of censorship in any detail. He admitted that some things should not be allowed, which is to admit the principle of censorship; but he also vigorously condemned all possible censors. A convenient point of departure for a consideration of the subject is provided by two essays in



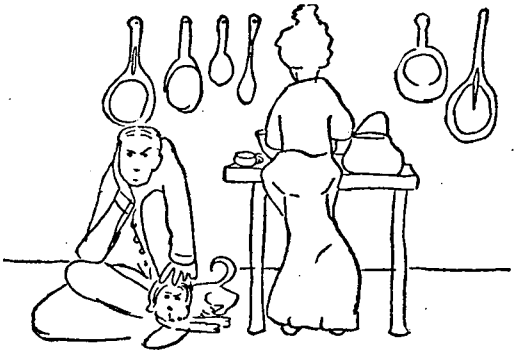
AMERICAN MALE POSTURES

*"American men, more than any others, permit the complexities of the psycho-physical world to get them down. Often, while down, they will pass each other going somewhere, and exchange a small greeting."—From "Is Sex Necessary?" by James Thurber and E. B. White, the funniest book in recent months—both an amusing social satire and a hilarious burlesque of all literature that treats sex as a branch of psychopathology.*

the January *Atlantic Monthly* by William Allan Neilson, president of Smith College, and Edward Weeks, prominent in Boston publishing and literary editor of the *Atlantic*.

It presumably takes courage for a man in the position of Mr. Neilson to publish his views of censorship. We hope he will not suffer for his interesting article, but certain startling facts emerge from it, notably that Mr. Neilson has apparently not yet made up his mind whether or not he favors any censorship at all. He admits that "liberty" cannot be absolute, but the only legal prohibitions he goes on record as approving are directed against loud radios, conspicuous display of offensive pictures, and misleading blurbs—which, of course, have nothing to do with censorship. Otherwise all his arguments and nearly all his incidental remarks are in behalf of freedom and against restriction.

Before proceeding perhaps we should make more clear the basis from which we start. In our opinion the question whether there should, or should not, be censorship simply does not arise. There *is* censorship, there always *has* been censorship, there always *will* be censorship. The vast majority of citizens know that books can have a demoralizing effect on young people and that laws preventing such books from reaching those whom they may demoralize must be enacted and enforced. That is censorship. The only persons opposed are chronic libertarians (who usually do not realize the logical consequences of their protests), moral revolutionaries, and a third group intimidated or "suggested" by the others into thinking and saying they oppose censorship when they really favor it. The small minority composed of these kinds of persons has been noisy during the last decade and has even attained to some influence, but actually



FUDGE-MAKING

*"The female, equipped with a defence far superior in polymorphous ingenuities to the rather simple attack of the male, developed, and perfected, the diversion subterfuge. The first manifestation of this remarkable phenomenon was fudge-making."—From "Is Sex Necessary?" by James Thurber and E. B. White. (Harpers.)*

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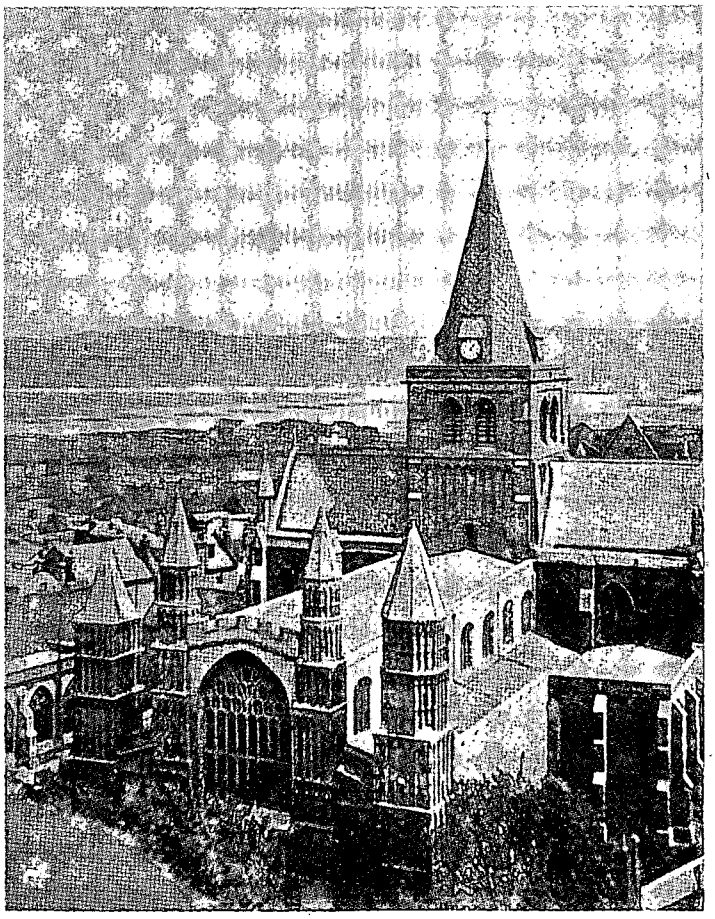

THE SCENE OF THE MURDER OF EDWIN DROOD

*Cloisterham Cathedral, in the village of Cloisterham. It was probably in the cathedral that the murder of Edwin Drood took place for which Mr. Duffield provides the ingenious solution presented in this issue of* THE BOOKMAN. *John Jasper was the choir-master of the cathedral. On a midnight climb up the tower Jasper and his accomplice met with a most auspicious omen—the call of rooks heard within sight of a river.*

it is so unimportant as not to be worth considering. They are merely the eternal disgruntled few.

Mr. Neilson divides the subject into two separate problems, for adolescents and for adults, but even in the case of adolescents does not recommend any legal protection. "It is justifiable and probably necessary," he says, to keep the young from certain types of books, but this is "mainly for parents and teachers rather than for the police". For young people beyond the control of parents and teachers he mentions the old laws against selling liquor to minors and remarks "I suppose similar laws could be made in connection with sales of books". But then he quickly draws back from this near approach to a legal recommendation by raising two

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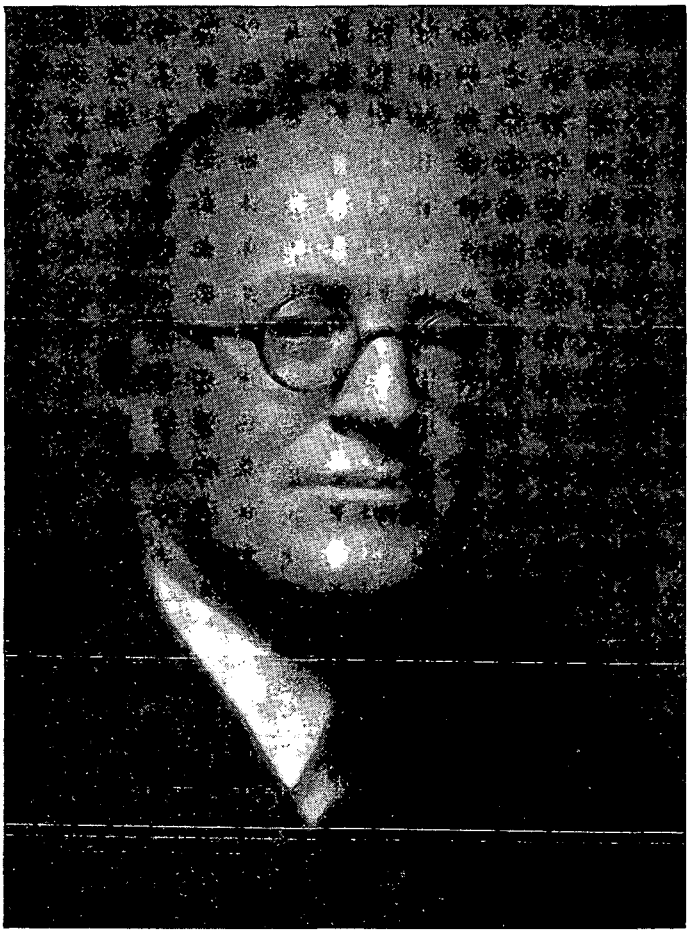

HUGH WALPOLE

*A new portrait of the distinguished English novelist, now visiting this country and delivering several lectures. Mr. Walpole's most recent book, "Hans Frost", is a novel about a novelist.*

*Copyright by Pirie MacDonald*

objections: 1. Prohibited objects acquire the attraction of forbidden fruit; 2. Such efforts are usually too late, since by college age modern youth knows most of the facts. The first objection is certainly the inevitable accompaniment of all prohibitions, but hardly in itself an argument against them. The second point seems startlingly irrelevant, since the question is not of information but of inflammation.

As to the problem of censorship for adults, Mr. Neilson's opinions may be summarized briefly, but we think fairly and for the most part in his own words, as follows: "The independent thinker resents the officious intrusion of some branch of the government into what is after all his own affair, the saving of his soul. He is strengthened in this feeling by the fatuous results of censorship, such as the nation-wide advertising a book acquires from being prohibited in one city; the Massachusetts law permitting books to be condemned for detached passages; the absurdities of the customs censorship exposed by Senator Cutting. In fact nearly everybody considers it self-evident that police, customs, and postal authorities should stick to their proper business of keeping the peace, collecting revenue, and carrying mail, and *not* try to judge art or morals".

The only logical conclusion from this, of course, would be no censorship at all, since it rules out every possible agency for enforcing laws. This Mr. Neilson does not quite

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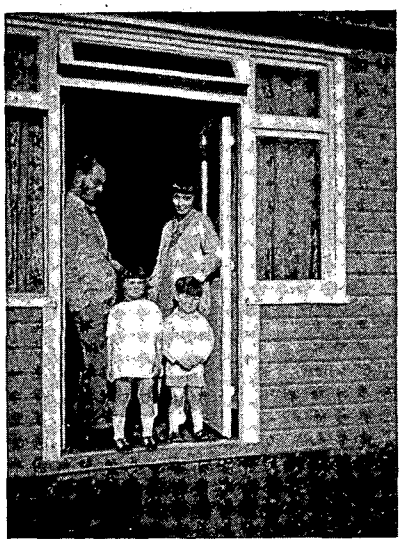
propose. In fact he goes right on in his peroration to state that the job of someone completing his analysis would be to "find a method of selecting censors wise enough to suppress only what is really demoralizing". The admission that literature can be "really demoralizing" is of course fatal to the libertarian position. Mr. Neilson is doubtless really on the side of censorship, and has merely been led by exasperation at unsatisfactory enforcement to drop into the anti-censorship manner of speech. But to make any effective contribution to the discussion one must either: oppose censorship; or suggest better ways to conduct it. But Mr. Neilson has merely dwelt on some of the difficulties and anomalies that censorship involves—and, we might add, always will involve to some extent.

Should Mr. Neilson's hint about laws prohibiting the sale of "certain kinds" of books (he avoids the words "obscene" like the plague) be brought forward as a definite proposal, one necessary corollary should be noted: to forbid books to minors but allow them freely to adults means *legalizing every kind of obscene literature*. On the question whether all adults should have free access to every kind of writing we confess to having as yet no definite opinion. But that need not be decided before one recognizes the impracticability of the whole suggestion. We think that anybody picturing the actual difficulties that would arise in protecting youth while at the same time allowing the full and open sale of obscene literature to adults, will agree that the real result would be nullification of the laws. That means, in effect, that censorship must for the most part be as stringent for adults as for adolescents. In other words, the sharp distinction which Mr. Neilson makes, in common with many others, between the proper methods of treating the two classes has little or no practical bearing.

Mr. Neilson condemns, as we have seen,



J. MIDDLETON MURRY

*with his wife and children. Mr. Murry's new book, "God", is another volume in his series of discussions of religious problems, previous volumes being "To the Unknown God", "Jesus, Man of Genius", "Things to Come". A new edition of his novel "The Things We Are" has just been issued.*

OWEN JOHNSON

*Whose latest novel is "Sacrifice".*

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*Photograph by Cecil Beaton, London*

STORM JAMESON

*author of "The Voyage Home", the second volume in a trilogy of which the first was "The Lovely Ship".* BOOKMAN *readers will recall Miss Jameson's striking study of modern fiction "The Georgian Novel and Mr. Robinson".*

all the existing agencies of enforcing censorship laws, and offers no alternative. In this he is more sweeping than Mr. Weeks, the author of the companion article. Mr. Weeks rules out the customs and the post-office, but admits the police backed by judge and jury, offering this as adequate for the whole problem. (One aspect of Mr. Weeks's paper, a plea for a change in the present Massachusetts law, we will take up later; this is an acute state issue, of course, but only incidental to the general problem.) He also, in contradistinction to Mr. Neilson, makes it clear that he favors censorship, although he falls into the same error of making a sharp division between the cases of adolescents and adults. Most of his paper is devoted to piling up examples to prove that the efforts of the customs, the post-office, and all private organizations and individuals to assist in enforcing censorship are so erratic that only absurdities and injustices can result from the coöperation.

The finding of flaws in the practice of censorship is easy enough. One can find so many that one's first impulse is to push the persons hitherto responsible for the job out of the picture—impatiently and without alternative, as Mr. Neilson does, or deliberately and with a different remedy in hand, as in the case of Mr. Weeks. Let us neglect for a moment the private assistants to the enforcement laws against whom Mr. Weeks is so impassioned, and consider his recommendations for the legally empowered authorities. He says of censorship by the customs and the post-office, "There is ample evidence to show that such bureaucratic censorship is erratic, ill-considered, and unjust; and there is ample evidence to show that censors once placed in authority will rigorously prosecute their charge, if only to justify their appointment". And so, away with any censorship in the post-office or the customs house! But a moment's reflection will show that unless obscene literature can be effectively forbidden importation from abroad and transportation through the mails the evasion of any state censorship law is made so easy as to result in nullification.

Mr. Weeks's remedy for bureaucratic censorship abuses, among which he apparently classes any summary suppression of books by the police, is "fair trial before a jury and judge". Now certainly the right to trial by jury must always be protected. But a procedure whereby no complaint against a book on obscenity grounds could result in suppression except after conviction by court trial is impracticable for three reasons, each sufficient by itself:

1. While being tried the book would be on the open market, enjoying all the sales its publisher ever dreamed for it; thus nullifying the main purpose of the complaint;

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2. The cost and the burden, both to the state and to individuals, would be intolerable;

3. Although trial by jury must always be the unanswerable last resort, nevertheless it can be shown that in the case of literary censorship this procedure is at least as erratic as the decisions of bureaucrats. The same is true of the verdicts of magistrates. In other words, this remedy adds difficulties without making the results satisfactory except by making them more final and unalterable. It also reduces the possibility that those who enforce censorship may profit by experience.

In other words, there we are back again, with the customs, post-office, and police forced to use their own judgment, tempered only in the last case, and then only occasionally, by open trial. Blocked from ruling out the present official agencies of censorship, one is next inclined to try to set somebody over them—some board of experts, officially (that is to say, politically) appointed and subsidized by the state, empowered to tell the police (or, if nationally appointed, the customs and post-office) what books they may suppress. But such an organization is, of course, a political impossibility—so clearly so, owing to the difficulty and delicacy of the work to be done, that the suggestion is not worth serious consideration.

The upshot of these last few paragraphs is this: it can be shown, and Mr. Neilson and Mr. Weeks have shown it abundantly, that censorship by customs, post-office and police is often absurd. We believe it can also be shown—we have presented some of the reasons—that censorship by any other means is impossible. The problem then, is to reduce the number of absurdities by steps taken within the existing system. We think that much improvement can be made, but not by any startling innovations: merely by a better understanding of the nature of the task by that part of the public concerned. To this end we proceed to some general reflections and specific suggestions, presenting them in outline only, reserving a fuller development in the hope that criticism will furnish further enlightenment.

The purpose of censorship is to prevent literature which may corrupt from being available to those who may be corrupted by it. The law cannot be so framed as to cover particular cases, and therefore the law forbids all manufacture and distribution of such literature.

In the enforcement of the law there are two problems: 1. Books obviously forbidden; 2. Borderline books. It is the second class which causes almost all the trouble and scandal, but the suppression of straight pornography also presents special difficulties.

For one thing, experience has shown that censorship laws will not be enforced if left entirely to the police. Their work has to be supplemented by private societies acting as investigators and complainants, such as the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice and the Boston Watch and Ward Society. This work is essentially a part of the official police activities and is largely executive, the only judgment required being a certain degree of selection in the cases to be prosecuted. The wise prosecutor, since he must limit his activities somewhere, remembers that while the letter of the law is and must be to wipe out all obscene literature, its spirit is to prevent corruption. This distinction leads to a certain tacit condoning and even to graft, but is an inevitable working basis, as in other good laws.

Acting on the clear-cut cases is comparatively simple: deciding on the doubtful cases is extremely hard. This distinction seems banal, and yet we think the failure to recognize the enormous difference between these two aspects of censorship is the chief source of friction and scandal. For it results in failure to see that most of the trouble is inherent in the problem itself and is not the result of any grossly improper method of cure which may be improved by drastic alteration. To prove absurdity in the outcome is not to prove absurdity in the means, but difficulty

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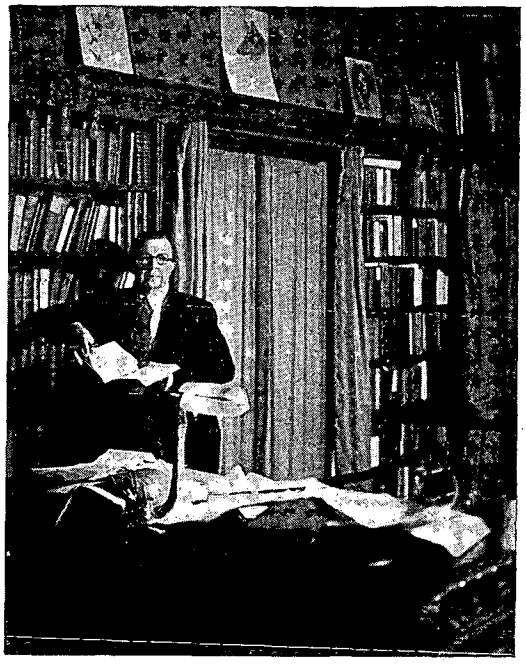

RUPERT HUGHES

*in his study. The third volume of his life of George Washington has just been published.*

in the problem. It might be said that all the ridicule and wrath which Mr. Neilson and Mr. Weeks and many other keen critics heap on the agents of censorship, and even make their principal contribution to the subject, establishes nothing more than that life is very complex and that the hardest job in it is bringing up children.

For the problem of censorship is the problem of the moral education of the young, and moral education where it is more complex and delicate even than training in conduct—analyzing the subtle effect of literature on impressionable minds. Moreover, literature brings up more than the question of purely moral influences. While morality with all its complexity is constant, there is besides the ever-shifting and hardly less complex field of manners, both of action and of word-usage, shading off into morals and deeply influencing morals. This, if any part of life, might be called the firing-line. And it is in this dangerous, fateful terrain that the decisions of censorship fall.

In one sense it is easy to agree with those who pronounce police, postal and customs authorities incompetent to decide such questions: *nobody* is thoroughly competent. Nevertheless the decisions have to be made, and the enforcers of law are the only ones to do it. (Always, of course, with the possibility of recourse to jury trial in police cases; but in such matters jury trial, while final, is little better than tossing a coin; it is far easier to determine the motives in a murder than the corruptive power of a book.)

Officials must decide questions upon which they are incompetent? Yes—but not necessarily without the best advice available. For there are experts here as elsewhere: the experts in moral education are the ablest leaders of general education and the churches. The voluntary assistance of such men is the only possible solution of a pressing problem. But a group of such men cannot have any official position; its appointment, as we have said, would be a political impossibility. It must be a voluntary, private body, deriving its authority from deserving it—by being clearly the best available men. It must win the coöperation of booksellers, because the inevitable accompaniment of an effective censorship is the instant boycott of disapproved books. It must win the coöperation of publishers, since under an effective censorship publishers would often prefer to have manuscripts judged in advance of publication.

A still, small voice from Boston (or, more probably, a shrill and somewhat hysterical voice from Boston): "But what is the Watch and Ward Society but such a self-appointed group of ministers and college professors who have forced themselves on the police and intimidated the booksellers and even acted as a curb to high-minded publishers?" Exactly: the Watch and Ward Society seems to us the nearest approach this country has yet seen to the only satisfactory solution that the problem can have.

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But let us discriminate. For the most part the censorship work of the Watch and Ward has lain in the first of the two classes into which we divided the subject, the comparatively simple one of enforcing the law in clear-cut cases. In this it has shown the quality necessary to the work, efficiency, as has also the Society for the Suppression of Vice. But unlike the latter organization, the Watch and Ward has shown an understanding of the second and vastly more important branch of the work, that of building up the proper machinery for deciding the doubtful cases and acquiring authority for its decisions. We do not say the Society has succeeded brilliantly, but in principle it has been on the right track. It is the principle we approve.

Beyond what has appeared in the papers in recent years we do not, as it happens, know much of the Watch and Ward Society's record. Reading between the lines of the published reports, invariably hostile, we incline to think the Society deserves much more respect than it is generally accorded. Mr. Weeks, for instance, is especially vexed with the Society and inserts derogatory remarks throughout his article, but in all his list of absurdities the only reflection on the Watch and Ward is a suggestion that it *may* have objected to eleven books in two years on insufficient grounds. Again, in the current debate on the wording of the Massachusetts censorship law, the Watch and Ward spokesmen seem to us to be the only ones to take a sound position. As everyone knows, the Massachusetts law forbids a book "containing obscene, indecent or impure language, or manifestly tending to corrupt the morals of youth". This wording has resulted in the manifest injustice of books which clearly did not break the spirit of the law being suppressed for isolated passages. To remedy this, the Citizens' Committee, comprising many of the most influential citizens of the Commonwealth, urges changing the first phrase to "which, considered as a whole, is obscene, indecent or impure", etc. This seems an improvement, and might well work out more justly. Nevertheless the Watch and Ward Society seems to us unanswerably right in opposing the inclusion of the phrase "considered as a whole" on the grounds that if the new bill were adopted "the whole book would be the only test", and that "some latitude should be allowed the court in determining the basis on which the character of a book is to be judged". (Incidentally, readers should be warned that a misprint in the law as quoted in Mr. Weeks's *Atlantic* article, the omission of the comma and "or" after "language", made the law read much more reasonably than it really does.)

We do not doubt there are blots on the Watch and Ward Society's records. Our main point has been to emphasize the extreme difficulty of the work involved in all censorship, inevitably leading to the "erratic, ill-considered, and unjust" judgments which so disgust Mr. Weeks. The recent Dunster House case would certainly seem from the reports to have been a blunder. Moreover, it was a blunder not in the difficult part of the work, the decision on dubious books (there is no serious claim that *Lady Chatterley's Lover* should be made available through the ordinary channels), but in the simple matter of enforcing the law. Trapping a bookseller known to be respectable into a technical violation could only have arisen from the mistaken notion that the Society's business was to secure convictions, after the manner of an ambitious prosecuting attorney, rather than to prevent demoralizing literature from reaching those whom it might demoralize. The Society's actions, as reported, were unjust; and worse than unjust, they were unwise. The price of censorship is considerable vigilance but eternal tact.

But the point is not any specific error of the Watch and Ward Society. For all we know the Society may shortly be entirely discredited, though that would be a pity. The Dunster House case, coming at the height of a libertarian wave, and inevitably alienating

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MAURICE DEKOBRA

*in his private bar at his home in Paris. His novel "The Madonna of the Sleeping-Cars" was an international success. His latest is "Serenade to the Hangman".*

booksellers, may kill it. But the principle on which the Society worked will not fall out of sight. In fact we believe that any rigorous thinking on the problem of censorship will always lead to the Watch and Ward solution.

We have one concrete suggestion, calculated to remedy a defect which seems to us to endanger the safe working of the Watch and Ward principle, and which may well account for blunders in the past. We have been insisting on the two distinct functions of censorship agencies, the prosecuting and the judicial. So distinct, and even conflicting, are the two activities that we very much doubt that they can be successfully combined in one organization. Certainly the men suited to one task are rarely suited to the other also. It is no disparagement of the qualities of public-spiritedness, zeal, energy and intelligence needed in able investigation and prosecution to say that the qualities needed in the judicial duties are much rarer.

We think it likely that the only way to enlist the services of the ablest possible men, and to achieve efficiency, is to divide the tasks between two organizations with entirely separate personnel. From this basis it might well be possible to induce churchmen and educators of the necessary literary scholarship, tact, broad-mindedness and statesmanship to consider service on such a board a civic duty. Their decisions would promptly secure the respect of the prosecuting society, the police and the booksellers, and reduce to the lowest human minimum errors of judgment which have always provided the excuse for the libertarians to endanger the whole cause of censorship.

While it is under fire the Watch and Ward Society can hardly make any radical change. But we earnestly urge them to consider the possibility of dividing into two separate bodies. The same question hardly applies to the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, which has never shown any capacity for more than the enforcement side of the work. But a related organization such as we propose—and there are scores of local men with every needed quality—established in New York would go far toward solving the censorship problems on a national scale.

We will add a minor but perhaps necessary reminder. One of the most familiar tactics of all self-appointed censors of censorship is to use the term "self-appointed" as though it were necessarily an epithet. But surely if a man assumes a difficult, disagreeable and thankless public task, and demonstrates his fitness to fill it, his self-appointment is to his greater credit.

A voice from Boston: "Here we are, the laughing-stock of the nation because of the Watch and Ward Society and other such fanatics, and for relief you recommend *two* Watch and Ward Societies!" So be it.

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# THE STORY OF THE LITTLE MAGAZINES

## II. MAKING NO COMPROMISE WITH THE PUBLIC TASTE

*by William Troy*

In the bright morning of the little magazine, which broke upon the world somewhere around the year 1912, the pioneers stood out against the vermilion sky in very bold relief. They were still rare enough to be looked up by a bewildered public as something novel, strange and even monstrous. Mr. Wyndham Lewis's *Blast*, for example, was able to send tremors through an England that was not yet accustomed to the cannons of Flanders and Picardy. The *Little Review* was forced to draw out an endless *mésalliance* with a post-office department that showed itself time and again insusceptible to the Rabelaisian qualities of Mr. James Joyce's prose. And in Chicago the little green journal called *Poetry* puzzled minds incapable of thinking of that city except as "hog-butcher of the world". The *Egoist*, the *Seven Arts*, and (in the beginning) the *Dial* cast their fierce red light across the tranquil waters of current journalism with a distinctness that none could mistake. But after a short time all these early beacons were obscured, or at least dimmed, by the magnitude of their own influence.

Beginning as the lonely gesture of a few discontented individuals or factions, the little magazine rapidly became the ordinary mode of communication for the revived spirit of literary reform. From every province of the literary empire, fresh recruits enlisted in the motley army that marched with such arrogant confidence against the trembling *ancien régime*. It is as hard now as then to distinguish much order or sequence in their straggling ranks, or to separate them too dependably into brigades. Individuals, every one of them, with a natural antipathy to pigeon-holes, they can be met and understood only as individuals. Perhaps the sole feature they shared in common was the impulse that animated and sustained their existence.

That impulse was nothing more mysterious or unfamiliar than the perennial human need for expression, or for what is now more frequently called "self-expression". Let it be noted, however, that this impulse is one that is seldom released of its own accord, that it requires a special set of conditions to call it into full play. Self-expression, as we are so often reminded by classical writers, is a distinctly romantic necessity, and like everything else romantic thrives best when it is opposed. It is what the psychologists would describe as a negative response to a situation. In other words, we seem never more anxious to express ourselves than when our right to do so threatens to be removed. We are most eloquent when we are asked to remain silent. The little magazines felt that the pressure against certain kinds of speech was very strong in the opening years of the present century; and the eloquence which they often attained was the result of this conviction. The most vital of them, certainly, were those which were most passionately conscious of oppression. This it was that supplied their



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courage, their gusto and their perseverance. This it was, in fact, that constituted their *raison d'être.*

The little magazines, or at least the best of them, aimed therefore at being the expression of an individual point of view. While such a view meant usually one that was new or heterodox or in some way different from the one that obtained in the public mind, it might have been further defined according to whether it was the view of a minority, of a group, or of a single individual. All the little magazines, however enlarged their outlook seemed to become later, undoubtedly owed their origin to the faith and enterprise of single individuals. And the first class that comes naturally to mind was made up of those who were most frankly dominated by the personality of their editors or founders. As "one-man shows" were popular in the salons of the new artists, so also there was a large number of what we might call "one-man" magazines. In 1913, for example, William Marion Reedy took over a weekly journal of opinion that had been known in St. Louis for some years as the *Mirror*, renamed it *Reedy's Mirror*, and made of it a vehicle for extending his formidable personal influence over the whole Middle-West. In this aggressive and sympathetic figure that region found its first great champion. Although his own interests were mainly sociological, he encouraged all the new literary men that came under his notice, including Carl Sandburg and Edgar Lee Masters, whose sensational *Spoon River Anthology* appeared originally in his pages.

How intimately the appeal of *Reedy's Mirror* depended on its founder may be judged by the fact that it was unable to survive his death in 1920. Perhaps its influence afforded a precedent for Mr. H. L. Mencken, who was busily declaring guerilla warfare on American democracy from the back pages of the old *Smart Set.* The readers of that anomalous monthly could have been divided into two classes: those who enjoyed the sentimental stories and epigrams in the front and those who enjoyed the unsentimental roarings that issued from Mr. Mencken in the rear. For, at that time, Mr. Mencken was still an individual; he had not yet created the larger part of the American republic after his own image. Except for the indefatigable *All's Well,* conducted by Charles J. Finger in Fayettesville, Arkansas, other single-handed attempts to corner the market of public opinion met with little success. Frank Harris, that scarred veteran of so many journalistic wars, returning to New York in 1917, an exile in his own land, was unable to infuse enough contemporary spirit into *Pearson's* to bring it very actively back to life. *Bruno's,* which succeeded it for the length of a year, made even less impression. But *The Soil,* brought out by Robert J. Coady during 1916-1917, confining itself more strictly to the literary arts, had an influence that was no less real because it was so slow and indefinite.

For the astonishing range of novelties, hoaxes and bona fide literary articles that he served his readers, Coady has never been equalled. He was among the first to proselytize in favor of Charles Chaplin, African sculpture, prize-fighting, Gertrude Stein, American slang and dressmaking as an art. He printed a whole novel by the author of *Nick Carter* because he believed that for "straight and swift narration the dime-novel has not yet been surpassed". He reproduced facsimile telegram-blanks side by side with El Greco's "Sacred and Profane Love", and heralded the steel-hammer as the symbol of the age. If Coady is little remembered, it is perhaps because he was too preoccupied with the future; for his future has now become our present. But he possessed to an almost exaggerated degree what is one of the prime requisites of the good editor—the ability to anticipate with certainty the next move the public mind is likely to make.

Another and different sort of editorial talent was illustrated in a tiny publication that emanated from Northampton, Massachusetts

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under the curious title *S4N*. Many had tried the experiment of uniting widely divergent points of view under a single cover, but none so nearly approached success, or in a more inconspicuous fashion, than Norman Fitts. The mystic symbols, *S4N*, were supposed to stand for faith in "the principle of growth through disagreement". Thornton Wilder and Hart Crane, William Lyon Phelps and Gorham B. Munson, found themselves there, probably for the last time, in the same company. Norman Fitts offered a splendid example of the editor as bandmaster.

What influence will be exerted by such recent specimens of "one-man" editorship as Mr. Wyndham Lewis's *Enemy* and Mr. Ezra Pound's *Exile*, it is too early to determine. In his announcement, Mr. Pound exhorted young writers to submit new work, preferably "unutterable or magnificent", but manuscripts of the second sort have apparently been slow in reaching his office. And as for *Enemy*, it is less a magazine than a rather confused bulletin of Mr. Lewis's disapproval with the world in its last quarter of a century.

Not many of the little magazines fell too clearly into the autocratic class. More often they were the products of the numerous schools, cliques and factions which abounded at the time. The emergence of literary groups was indeed one of the novel features of the little movement; for there had never been any strong tradition of unity among young artists and writers in English-speaking countries. Something in the Anglo-Saxon temperament seemed to be opposed to the union of genius and sociability. For a time, however, there were almost as many literary "chapels" springing up in those countries as anywhere on the Continent. Few of them, it is true, were able to preserve much solidarity among their members; the definition of a literary group as a collection of people who cordially dislike each other seemed more than half true. But almost all of them managed to hold together long enough to make themselves articulate through the medium of the little magazine.

The swarm of verse magazines that followed in the wake of Miss Monroe's *Poetry* represented about all the attitudes that it was then possible to hold regarding this particular branch of the literary art. Before 1914, Miss Monroe had been able to take care of pretty nearly all the interesting verse being written, but after that date her slender vessel was by no means adequate to the supply. *Others*, in 1915, relieved some of the cargo and struck out a few notes of its own. If it published Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot and Conrad Aiken, it also introduced newer figures like Mina Loy, W. C. Williams, and Marianne Moore to the already exhausted public. Alfred Kreymborg, author of *Mushrooms*, was the reigning spirit of the *Others* group, who stood for "a democracy of feeling rebelling against an aristocracy of form". The very next year, Charles Wharton Stork set up *Contemporary Verse*, probably the last stronghold of the genteel verse-makers against the invading hordes of the barbarians. Unfortunately, its quiet murmur was scarcely heard above the lusty shouts with which these new champions, one after another, entered upon the field. We cannot pause to render each of them his due; their names overwhelm the imagination like the catalogue of heroes in the *Iliad*: *Palms, Rhythmus, Voices, Parnassus, Measure, Fugitive, Lariat, Star-Dust, Forge, Palo Verde, Muse and Mirror.* Better than in cold prose the vanished among them (for not all have yet descended to Orcus) should be commemorated in one of those sad ballades which demand of us in their refrains "where are the snows of yesteryear?"

Each of these magazines of verse had some birthmark or other emblem of distinction which set it apart from the rest. *Measure*, for example, encouraged in such poets as Léonie Adams, Louise Bogan and Genevieve Taggard a type of feminine talent that was at once more cerebral and more richly poetic

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than that which had flourished earlier in the movement. *Fugitive*, in the South, opposed a more sharply intellectual approach to the current romanticism. And *Rhythmus*, to drop to a more mundane level, promised contributors one dollar a line for their verse.

If we have left the English contingent to one side, it is because it was smaller and had a less emphatic accent. Harold Monro was the outstanding protagonist. It was this excellent modern poet who carried on the *Poetry Review*, which Stephen Phillips founded in 1912, and who issued an interesting series of chapbooks through his Poetry Bookshop in London. *Wheels* was the organ of an eclectic group that included Aldous Huxley and the three Sitwells. But *Decachord*, the London *Voices* and a few others were so comfortably attached to the nineteenth century that they were scarcely to be considered contemporary. At no moment were the verse magazines in England so serious a menace to national tranquillity as in the United States.

Even more numerous, as was natural, were the reviews consecrated to experimentation in other forms than verse. The more enterprising of these marked a reaction against the largely sociological preoccupations of the generation then in the spotlight. There came a time finally when Messrs. Mencken, Dreiser and Anderson were so wholeheartedly adopted by the great reading public that they could no longer expect to hold their prestige with the younger literati. Not only had the alternately sombre and hilarious view of American life which these writers promulgated become quite monotonous, it had also proved itself wholly non-creative. It was non-creative because it lacked both the imagination to envisage the future possibilities of experience in America and the ability to convey its own sense of limitations in any very potent or beautiful form.

Among the first to sound the reaction was *Secession*, which began in Vienna in 1922 but moved later to Brooklyn. It was an earnest attempt on the part of a few highly charged young writers to come to some working terms with their time. *Secession*, in its literary sense, was defined by its principal spokesman, Mr. Gorham B. Munson, as "a calm, intelligent, resolute swerving-aside, an unemotional sloughing-off of irrelevant drains upon our energies and a prompt deviation into purely aesthetic concerns". The Secessionists, in other words, preferred to regard their native land as a rich field for artistic exploitation than as a subject for satire. In certain of his apocalyptic poems, Hart Crane strove to merge his own intense personal vision with the confused panorama of modern industrial civilization. Matthew Josephson and Malcolm Cowley wrote sometimes in a style that was intended to resemble advertising. Shortly after *Secession* went the way of all similar endeavors, Edwin Seaver provided shelter for some of its members in *1924*, which dispensed with any set policy. "*1924* has no policy," it explained, "we are not investing in a mausoleum." *Folio*, with a distinctly Jewish bias, belongs to this same period. And three years later, *The Figure in the Carpet*, whose baffling title out of Henry James was alone sufficient to discourage most readers, defended the practice of writing as a serious craft throughout its brief and almost clandestine existence. Devoted solely to prose, it offered the retort courteous to the verse magazines. It was superseded the next season by *Salient*, which has also owed its support to The New School for Social Research, in New York City.

There were also a number of journals whose esthetic programs were supplemented by local or regional ambitions. The sluggish cultural consciousness of what New York always called "the provinces" was finally aroused by the arrogant domination of that city, and something like a renaissance threatened in certain sections of the country. In Philadelphia, for example, the *Guardian* was quite frank in admitting that it was "an attempt to be no longer suburban to

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Cosmopolis". Boston, former capital of letters, emerged more slowly with the *Hound & Horn* and the recent *Pagany*. The *Modern Review* emanated from Winchester, Massachusetts and *Phantasmus* from Pittsburgh. As for Chicago, it had challenged Eastern despotism from the beginning, and to its long list of entries it now added *Youth* and *The Wave*. From the Middle-West also came *Midland* and the *Golden Galleon*. The bohemian colony in New Mexico relieved itself through several ventures, of which the *Laughing Horse* has been the most determined. The Pacific coast was almost inarticulate until Janet Lewis and Yvor Winters commenced sending out the mimeographed sheets of the *Gyroscope* from Palo Alto, California. But in the South, where literary independence is rooted in social and political tradition, the movement toward regional expression had been notably strong. Several publications rose up instantaneously to give the lie to Mr. Mencken's assertion that Southern literature had expired with the mint julep. The most deliberate in its aims was *Fugitive*, of Nashville, Tennessee, which protested at the same time that it fled from nothing faster than "the high-caste Brahmins of the old South". Asheville, North Carolina, responded with the *Southern Review*, and Richmond with the *Reviewer*, for which Emily Clark enlisted several of the more obvious local reputations. In the *Double Dealer*, whose scope was national, New Orleans recalled the high position she once occupied in American culture. And, at the moment, the strongest friend of the new tendencies anywhere in the provinces is *Blues*, whose offices are in Columbus, Mississippi.

There is no parallel for this fever of regionalism in England during the same period. Apparently the literary hegemony of London was not regarded as a cause for protest by the successors of *Blast* and the *Egoist*. Indeed, the protests of any sort that were heard after the war were few and subdued. *The Calendar of Modern Letters* was a substantial, well-mannered review that published D. H. Lawrence, Stephen Hudson, E. M. Forster and Siegfried Sassoon. None of these writers, however, was in urgent need of left-wing support by the year of grace 1925. *The New Coterie* was even less explicit as to its aims and squandered rather too much of its space on translations. It is possible that the progress of the little magazine in England was impeded by the tenacity of the older generations. The *Golden Hind*, the *Apple*, the *Owl*, *Life and Letters* were all unexciting studies in anachronism. Probably the best example of the species was the *Gypsy*, with its sonnet by Watts-Dunton, its essay by Edmund Gosse, its aquarelle of Paris by Arthur Symons. It was like a final sigh from the yellow 'nineties—a last sweep of their ghostly garments upon the macadam pavements of the twentieth century. Not exactly that, to be sure, may be said of either the *London Aphrodite* or *Experiment*, which have been desperately contemporary in accent. Both have taken occasion to vent their undergraduate spleen against the melancholy diagnoses of Mr. Lewis. And the *Criterion* (which happens to be edited by a former American) is so very modern that its sympathy at the moment vacillates between the thirteenth and the seventeenth centuries.

But English along with American writers figured in what may be considered the most recent stage in the evolution of the little magazine. Any résumé at present must conclude with that volatile group of expatriate journals, those internationals of letters, which have found better reasons for being born on European soil than on their own. We cannot allow ourselves to go too deeply into these reasons; they would take us too soon into matters that are better treated in the stories of Ernest Hemingway and the poetry of Archibald MacLeish. But we may suggest what was probably a strong stimulus in many cases: the cheaper costs of printing on the Continent, an advantage that made possible larger and more frequent risks than

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might be taken at home. It is extremely doubtful, for instance, whether *Broom* would have been able to make such an elegant entrance in New York or Chicago as it did in Rome. Founded in 1921 by Alfred Kreymborg, who will be remembered for earlier escapades on his native soil, *Broom* was a perfect cosmopolite, migrating from one capital to another, appropriating for its uses whatever current novelties it encountered on the way. The result of so much globe-trotting was sometimes confusing and bizarre, but nearly always interesting for the contrasts and comparisons shown between the younger generations of the New and the Old World. Less cosmopolitan in scope was Mr. Ford Madox Ford's *Transatlantic Review*, whose territory did not often extend beyond the Left Bank. Mr. Ford was more specially interested in opening a medium for his own work and for that of the several talented young English and American writers who happened to be living in his adopted neighborhood around the year 1924. Of those who were encouraged into later achievement by having their first work appear in the *Transatlantic*, Mr. Hemingway is easily the most celebrated.

Mr. Ford set the model for the various other exile publications that followed his retirement: *Contact, Close Up, Tambour, This Quarter*, and *transition*. None of these set up its long-range guns more effectively than *transition*. In fact, since the heyday of the *Little Review* in 1918 no little magazine has adhered so closely to definition or excited such general consternation. When Mr. Max Eastman undertook last year to prosecute what he called "the cult of unintelligibility" in contemporary letters, he revealed the principal offenders as the two most eminent of *transition's* contributors—Mr. James Joyce and Miss Gertrude Stein. The charge that Mr. Eastman and many others have raised against this journal has to do with its obscurity. It is maintained that in its pages the breach between the modern writer and the modern reader has become so widened that the effort toward understanding is no longer worth the trouble. The argument has reduced itself to the question of vocabulary, of how words are to be considered—whether as counters in a game, where values are mutually agreed upon in advance by reader and writer, or as highly personalized *signs*, whose meanings the reader must not expect to grasp in their entirety. The editors of *transition*, supported by the examples given by Miss Stein and Mr. Joyce, hold to the latter interpretation, and advocate an immediate and drastic "Revolution of the Word". While they have never undertaken their defence in exactly this way they might cause some temporary embarrassment to their opponents by reminding them that every advance movement in the arts has been similarly taxed with its want of clearness. They might even establish that the slowness of the general comprehension is the most reassuring thing in their favor. But, at the end, the objection would no doubt still remain valid that for the greater number of readers *transition* reads like an almost totally inscrutable scroll.

With this review, whose credit rests so largely with the future, the little magazine passes into its current phase. The desire for self-expression, which we have seen manifested in such a lush variety of forms, appears finally to have developed into something which little resembles expression at all. The lid that held down writers' minds has been at last completely removed, but the things which leap out before our startled readers' eyes no longer bear any correspondence to our experience. And the result of this orgy of freedom, as far as modern writers are concerned, has been a serious questioning of how far they may legitimately carry their ideals. "Self-expression is not enough; experiment is not enough," remarks the editor of the *Little Review*, reading herself out of the party. A little later this former champion of ultra-modern tendencies concludes that litera-

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ture with the other arts has broken faith with its origin and function. If this is true it would seem that the little magazines should declare a truce.

That this has actually come about, and is not merely a logical necessity, has been seen in the recent decline of their birth-rate and the wholesale decimation of their older members. Of all those that were founded before the year 1920, *Poetry* alone lingers on—a somewhat chastened survivor of that gay, irreverent and diverting age. All that remains to consider is a few of the more definite effects they have had on the even flow of contemporary letters.

If the little magazines have lost much of their thunder these later days, it may be because they forced their enemies to compromise. The older English and American monthlies are no longer blindly opposed to the advancement of the newer modes in writing; they have discovered, in some cases, that these pay even from a commercial viewpoint. Those that have not already deepened a shade or two in their contents have at least changed the color of their covers. The heresies, the *bizarreries*, "the insults to common sense", of yesterday have become the platitudes of today, accepted casually in the most polite reading circles. To offer but one example, the recent suppression in Boston of a well-known monthly for printing a novel by Mr. Ernest Hemingway was held remarkable not because it reflected the altered taste of that monthly but because it reflected the unaltered taste of Boston.

At the same time, by pressing the opposite attitude as far as it seems likely to go, the little magazines have very probably hastened the advent of a more lucid, tranquil and responsible attitude toward the literary art. By spending their own energies so lavishly, they may have taught others valuable lessons in economy. The generation to which most of them were pledged was a romantic generation whose romanticism, with all its excesses and all its waste, may not be wholly without fruit. It cleared ground, opened new paths, made discoveries. But, more than anything else, it prepared the way for a strong reaction against itself, which in the end may be more important. Already we have numerous signs of this reaction against so much creative libertarianism, toward a recovery of that equilibrium which Mr. Eastman and others have found wanting in modern literature. Several of the very recent publications are marked by their extreme sobriety; a few of them have even proceeded so far as to revive the once dreaded word "classicism". In other ways also it is apparent that the little magazines have come their full circle.

But as soon as that is quite accomplished, as soon as the present movement toward classicism in the good sense relaxes into something that resembles classicism in the old bad sense, the cycle will recommence. The function of the little magazine will be once again to stir the lifeless forms from their contented slumbers. For the respite which they are granting us at the moment cannot be other than temporary.

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# A LETTER FROM ABROAD

## *by Rebecca West*

*The author, wearing a nose-ring, drops to her knees before the "Ulysses" of James Joyce—Answers an attack by Dr. Carlos Williams—Puts the incomprehensible English in their place—And gets neatly fooled by a little German authoress who longs to be fierce.*

*London, December.*

NEVER have I had less need of a daisy with which to play the old game, "He loves me, he loves me not", than when I read Dr. Carlos Williams's little essay on the subject of myself in the Joyceite volume named *An Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress.* So definitely is "not" the answer. How brutally did I, in my humble efforts towards elucidating a response to *Ulysses*, prove the truth of Baudelaire's embittered saying that woman is a brute—she has no dandyism—she eats when she is hungry and drinks when she is thirsty! In my gross female way I saw that *Ulysses* was a book, and I picked it up and read it. This coarse action I worsened by frequent repetition. It is true that throughout the proceedings I remained on my knees, in full knowledge that I was in the presence of a great genius, but that could not wipe out their primal indecency. I *read* the book, instead of taking it as an occasion for dandyism, a way of eclecticism, a fraternity pin. There is nothing to be done about it. Nothing, do I say! I am being very disingenuous. I ought to be candid and confess that I have done it again. I have read *Work in Progress.* I find it perfectly easy to understand, I admire it immensely. Nobody envisages more clearly than I do the frightfulness of the resultant situation. I see as in a crystal the Joyceite dandies crowding round the door of my rude hut in the jungle, watching me in horror while I squat in my lava-lava on the mud floor, flashing my betel-stained teeth and waggling my nose-ring at them in barbaric good-fellowship that unspeakably revolts their lilyhood, eating my yam, raising to my lips the shell of palm-wine . . . reading a book . . . the book . . . *Ulysses.* . . . But James Joyce, so different from his followers, in writing a book so eminently to be read, must wear a nose-ring too. His giving of reality to a world that needed reality shows that he too believes that one should eat when hungry and drink when thirsty. I continue to waggle my nose-ring.

* * *

It amuses me—I use the word contemptuously, for indeed Dr. Carlos Williams is a writer of a distinction which permeates all his work, and this attack on me is as able as can be considering that the place of our argument is licked by the flames of sectarian passion—that he persistently describes me as English. If I am English it is in exactly the same sense that Dr. Williams is English: that is, we are both involuntary heirs to a



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culture the headquarters of which has been in London for a few centuries. And of course this is what he means, only he implies that I accept that tradition as wholeheartedly as he rejects it. But the extreme inaccuracy of this statement in every other sense than this is entertaining in the illumination it casts on that beautiful American legend, the homogeneity of the British population. My mother was Scotch—Highland Scotch, which means that her family had only recently acquired the art of speaking English as their native language—and spent her youth in the well-known English cathedral cities known as Germany and Italy, and later emigrated to the suburb of London called Australia, whence she returned to Scotland. My father belonged to a family that had gone to Ireland in the reign of Edward VI and stayed there woodenly ever since; and after a few years in the British Army (most of them on the Canadian border) he spent most of his life in the English counties of the United States, Mexico, China, Australia and Africa.

The significant fact is that all their lives long both my progenitors regarded the English as incomprehensible foreigners, different from them in soul and body. My father believed that no Englishman could ride a horse properly. My mother believed that no Englishwoman was fit to have a child, because of her innate disposition to spend on her personal adornment what she ought to spend on its schooling. (At the time of the Reformation Scottish superstition transferred contact from religion to education.) Neither of these two persons could speak for one moment to an Englishman without immediately being recognized as a foreigner; since my father spoke pedantic English such as had not been spoken in England since the eighteenth century, and my mother had a Gaelic sing-song. I spent my first few years at a London kindergarten being bullied out of speaking an amalgam of my father's and mother's accents, and out of stubbornness I exaggerated this corrected form of speech when I went to a school in Edinburgh where they jeered at me because I did not speak like a Scot. In point of fact I never did learn to speak as the average English educated person does; and to this day English people who meet me are puzzled by my accent, and put me down either as an actress who has deliberately acquired a stylized manner of speech, or as a foreigner who has learned the language perfectly but still cannot eliminate certain peculiarities of intonation. But they are not as puzzled as I am by them; not only by their accent, but by everything about them. I cannot understand the English.

* * *

It is plain, from something visible in the white of Dr. Carlos Williams's eye at the moment when he is calling me English, that they are not his favorite among the peoples of the earth: that he thinks that the man who said *non Angli sed angeli* meant to frame a mean antithesis. I cannot say that I altogether agree with him, although I have known myself to be possessed by ungovernable fury when I have witnessed any of the pageants so frequent in London social life, when the prize specimens of Englishry parade in their glory. I remember one afternoon driving northwards from Hyde Park when the spectators of the Eton and Harrow match were all driving southwards, and becoming hysterical long before the end of the journey because the traffic block was setting me so often *vis-à-vis* an automobile-load of beautiful, sleek, blank-eyed people, who looked like gods or prize cattle and could not be proven either. One knew perfectly well that if one went on the assumption that they had Olympian qualities they would betray one by some large and clumsy movement of bovine thought; and on the other hand if one went on the assumption that they were just a lot of bulls and cows and calves they would sweep one to one's knees by some tremendous achievement of discipline and self-sacrifice. Whereas myself and my friends, who for the

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main part are Irish, Scotch, Americans, Germans, French and Jews, have an obvious consistency. You can recognize us at once for the imperfect and effective instruments that we are. This is, however, a point which I would have thought would worry none but persons who had to live in a state largely dominated by these persons. It does make revolt against a capitalist government by an intellectual conscious of the limitations of his own Labour Party a very difficult matter.

But I do not understand why the English people in general should be hateful to an outsider. I find them, as I have said, incomprehensible. I do not understand, for example, why Englishmen, who have an immense capacity for loving women, habitually ill-treat their womenfolk in the way of giving way to bad temper and being penurious, so that the standard type of Darby and Joan in this country consists of an old man leaning confidently on a maddened old woman who is sick of the sight of him. I do not understand why the English who have painted fewer good pictures than any other great nation of the world, have such a widespread passion for art that the peril the shipload of Italian masterpieces underwent during the recent storms inflamed the public imagination as if it had been an army of their own kind that was in danger. A queer people, it must be admitted, but I should hardly have said hateful.

* * *

Yet it is by their attitude to outsiders that outsiders judge them; and of that I who have lived so long among them cannot judge. I got a startling intimation of what it is supposed to be when I first visited the United States six years ago. It happened that just then I had the ill-luck to suffer a bereavement and to be attacked by a painful illness. In consequence I frequently went to parties and met people when I was so stunned by acute distress of mind and body that I could not make any adequate response to the situation. I had no disposition to throw myself on public sympathy, and I used to wonder uneasily what impression my dulness was making. It occurred to me that sympathetic people might guess I was ill, and that unsympathetic people would believe that I was stupid, and that neutrals might compromise with a theory that I had no social gifts, any of which alternatives would have been near enough the truth. To my amazement I found on enquiry that nearly all the persons concerned had come to the conclusion that I behaved as I did because I was English and was demonstrating my national indifference to all other nations by my stolid demeanor.

Apart from its false assumption that all that sails from Southampton is English there seemed a flaw in the argument. Had I been dominated by a desire to demonstrate my indifference to the United States (superb gesture between equals!) I could have achieved that end with the most rounded perfection by staying at home. Would the English, I wondered, really have gone to this onerous extreme of travelling for five days across the Atlantic and settling down for six months in a strange land in order to demonstrate their indifference to it? There is something fabulous about the idea of such energy directed to inertia, like Medusa's indiscriminating petrifications. But was there anything they would not believe of the English in this respect of fantastic conduct? My own top-note of experience was the night when a lady, fortified by four cocktails, much red wine and champagne, accompanied me to a reading given by a poetess, and after a specially long poem leant over to me and enquired what I thought of it. "I didn't catch it," I answered. She sat back. A fuddled look of moral dignity sat like a blowsy goddess on her brow. She rose, and left the theatre. The "tch" sound had started in her mind a belief that I had called her a simple zoölogical term. In no time the story got out to the Pacific Coast, squirmed on the shore and cast its coat, and came back in a new guise, its vitality greatly strengthened by the Californian climate, to the East.

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In this version I had applied the offensive word to the poetess. This extraordinary behavior too was explained by the alleged fact that I was English, though in England, God knows, this simple zoölogical term has not become a synonym for poetess.

* * *

Yet I got an inkling the other day of how the English madden the outsider. There came over from what Lorelei called the Central of Europe a female celebrity, who lately produced an undoubted masterpiece. She came, she went. Zip! Bam! Zowie! She came. Zip! Bam! Zowie! She went. She was not one of those artists who explain their own work; that became, every minute that she stayed in this country, more definitely one of the works we owe to inspiration over which the author's conscious has no control. As one of her most ardent admirers I gave a lunch-party for her, to which I bade four Englishwomen whom I greatly admire. One is a novelist; one a poet and novelist and scholar; the third is an economist; the fourth is a critic and politician, who had to leave one of the oldest and proudest Conservative families to find her place in the Labour Party. All had come out at some time of their lives against society in defence of a principle. All had achieved a solution of an eternal difficulty, which means a series of adjustments more difficult than the clenching of a moral resolution, in leading conscientious lives as women, as wives and mothers, and in carrying on conscientious careers. Not one of them has ever let fear or fatigue master her. The little celebrity came in, beautiful, thimble-small, primly explicit on the first instant that she was a Communist. "How nice," my four Englishwomen said, and went in to lunch.

For a little we talked. My friends were not showing their quality. I turned to the little celebrity to try and draw her into the conversation, but I found she was talking to her neighbor in German. I am so constituted that I have the utmost difficulty in speaking any language without making rather more mistakes than there are words in the sentence, but I have an unlimited power of absorption. So I heard the little celebrity say, "Tell me, are there all over London lunch-parties like these?" The other repeated enquiringly, "Like these?" "Like these," insisted the little celebrity. "Ladies gathered together just to talk." "Why, yes," answered the other, perplexed. "*Komisch*," said the little celebrity, and that was that. My blood boiled. *Komisch*, was it? I yearned to tell her the quality of her fellow guests in a tone that would tell her that she was not the only woman in the world, and then I suddenly saw what she meant. They looked like ladies gathered together just to talk. They had ironed out stress; they had abolished every sign of the effort which is the distinguishing mark of their kind; they had, as it were, gone back on themselves in every detail of their appearance. They were not smug, but they looked so. Now this was perhaps because, in a country where women have still not been given as a sex the emancipation which they have gained as individuals, where the socially important man's wife takes precedence in every way over the woman who has distinguished herself by her own work, there is a great need for the intellectual woman to ape the serenity of the parasite woman if she is to have any sort of a good time. But there was something else. When I conveyed to them that all was not well, they bent towards the little celebrity, they smiled graciously, but they did not step out of their frames. "Can't they show her?" I thought piteously. "Oh . . . these English. . . ."

* * *

A day or two later I took the chair at the dinner of a literary society at which she was the guest of honor; and there she was, still beautiful, still thimble-small, still primly explicit that she was a Communist. My impression of her had not changed, and neither did my impression of the English. For the situa-

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tion was difficult, and I was not particularly interested in it, my mind being bent on certain private matters. As millions of people will hear with complete indifference, I am writing another book. In such moments I give way to the genius of the occasion, the floating will of the company; if I were royalty this would be called unfailing tact. The trouble was that the little celebrity was feeling very communist. She had come in a plain black dress with a working-woman's shawl over her shoulders; and she had twisted her hair into a simple bun on her neck. Also, she had brought a speech with her; a speech you could have made toast by. It told the amiable society whose guest she was to go to the devil because it was not revolutionary, in terms as cordial as an assault. She was going to speak it. I had to read the translation of it. I knew it would be strongly resented by the members, who had every right to point out to the lady that if she did not like them she need not have come, did I not abandon myself to the presiding spirit of the occasion, which was thoroughly English.

When the celebrity sat down, her little mouth a straight line of defiance, I got up looking as English as I knew how, with a bland, blindish smirk, and in a very English voice, doing horrible things with the vowels, I uttered the expression of welcome to our guest and read the translation with as colorless an amiability as if I were reading the Annual Report of the local Girl Guides. A hundred or so English faces watched me as I did it; and I could see that they were taking the cue, that there would be nothing for the speech but polite applause. But I could not be sure whether or not they were being taken in by what I was doing. Their faces were nearly blank. For a minute I hesitated; I felt nearly as much at odds with them as the little celebrity did. While I paused they regarded me with a fixity that was completely detached. They would not forgive me if I did the one thing they consider a real sin, and permitted a scene to take place. I hated them for their mercilessness and went on, and sat down. They all applauded very kindly, and afterwards came round to say nice things to her. One woman said, easily and gracefully, "You see we like people who come and tell us the truth in our own house". "I would rather you had thrown inkpots at me," answered the little celebrity bitterly, "for Lenin says that all the proletariat should make it their business to be thrown out of bourgeois gatherings."

The people flowed round us like a glassy tide. I hated the English almost past bearing. What right have they to prevent these souls from crying out whose need it is to cry out? I said as much to the Englishman who sat beside me, "Think," I said, "how that little girl must have fought her way out of the darkness and narrowness of poverty to the light and breadth of her work! It isn't fair when fierceness is the thing that has brought her here not to let her be fierce when she wants to be!" And, because he seemed to be mumbling, I continued, "And what loyalty not to forget her class even when she might be having such a good time out of her success!" But presently I listened, having nothing more to say: and with his first sentence, "It isn't quite as you think", had later to agree. It seemed that the little celebrity's father was one of the richest wine-merchants in the whole of Germany. "She could buy up you and me many times over," he said, gently and without derision. "She must have had a tutor to teach her that Bavarian accent, for she was at one of the best schools in Germany." Merely someone was having a game. Quite a noble game, perhaps, but there was no real urgency about it. It had not mattered that she had been denied her martyrdom. Looking round at the English, I wondered if they had known this, if centuries of experience had told them that there is hardly ever any urgent reason for having a scene, for conceding a martyrdom. But even that their nearly blank faces would not tell me. Without doubt they are not an altogether likable people.

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# FICTION

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS *by H. M. Tomlinson* (HARPERS. $2.50)

IN THE background of present-day writing, where the people who like quiet are to be found, one of the most respected figures is certainly H. M. Tomlinson. He never woke to find himself famous and doubtless he never will, but his solid talent has gradually won him a recognition that a reader of any one of his books will admit is deserved.

His latest book, too ambitious to be completely successful, is a semi-autobiographic novel, in which the author appears when it is convenient, and, when it suits his fancy, vanishes into the wings. Others always have the center of the stage. His story opens in almost Kiplingesque tone in May, 1900, at a dockyard in London. The Boer War is on, jingoism and its timid bastard, scepticism, are alive in the air; everywhere men are eager for what is about to be. The book ends with a visitation to the weed-grown battlefields of the Western Front, still on a note of expectancy, but now the note is minor.

The story takes us from London shipyards to Fleet Street, to Mayfair, to the suburbs, to some jungle outpost which imperialist diplomacy in far-off Foreign Offices has turned into more of a hell than Nature intended it; to a philosopher's tobacco shop, to Ireland on the eve of rebellion, to 1914 and the rat-life of trench warfare. Threading lightly through these reminiscences runs the story of the Bolts—the father a master shipbuilder, a Little-Englander of the best (or worst) sort; the eldest son a doubter, a teacher, then a journalist, then a soldier, then a corpse. And around these threads the author embroiders a pattern, hardly certain, hardly brilliant, but somehow good to see. It must be that to hear the retelling of someone else's experience, if it is told with sufficient originality or artfulness, is a pleasure in itself; for there is little aid or comfort to be got out of Tomlinson's report. Among other things, he says this about the war: "Lots of men had a taste of Gethsemane, this time. It was no sort of a blessed garden. But nobody cared, for nobody knew. A man went through that agony alone, and not another soul could share it. Sympathy be damned! The world was gruesome with sympathy. It was worse than hate, for hate meant something, and sympathy nothing—no more than soft piety in self-comfort. Sympathizers who said they were sorry were liars, though they meant well".

Tomlinson is no inciter to action, no preacher; some (though they would be mistaken) might call him a pessimist. "There is no cure for human folly, that I know of; if you check it in one particular it breaks out in another place." He is an artist, though not primarily an entertainer. He should be read, as I think he must write, with the pipe of meditation in the mouth, or ready to hand.

IRON MAN *by W. R. Burnett* (DIAL PRESS. $2.50)

MR. BURNETT first dawned on the reading public last June, when his *Little Caesar*, now well known, was published, then chosen by the Literary Guild. Seven months later this industrious author gives us *Iron Man*, which is immediately snapped up by the Book-of-the-Month Club. The book clubs have seldom shown better judgment. For Mr. Burnett's books have a quality rarer than readability



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(itself a possession rare enough among the "good" books of the present day): they take such a compelling grip of the reader that he cannot put the story down until he has read it through. That Burnett can cast this spell over his readers—many of whom doubtless pride themselves on being immune to literary hokum—is no accident: he knows his trade. For so comparatively a beginning-author he has a distinctly mature and keen technique.

Coke Mason was a promising middleweight, with a good left hook and plenty of guts, but not too long on brains. Ever since he left the factory in Ohio he had been managed by his boyhood chum, George Regan. When the story opens, Coke is on the eve of his first important fight—with Prince Pearl, a shifty Negro boxer. Thanks largely to Regan's coaching, he wins by a knockout, and by rights should next have a chance at the middleweight title. But the champion is crafty: Coke fights several more times before his coveted opportunity arrives. And then the fight is a pretty near thing: the champion, an old-timer, floors him once and has him groggy, but Coke can "take it", and when his opening comes he wins, again by a knockout. When Coke is champion at last, Regan's troubles begin. Not that his protégé takes to dissipation or gets so puffed up that he can't hear sense: for Coke is a simple person with simple tastes, and his idea of himself never swells beyond the bounds of reason. But he has a wife, a real old-fashioned gold-digger, who left him when he fell on evil days, but for whom he still yearns. Regan distrusts their reunion, and he is right, for as soon as she regains her old ascendancy over Coke his fortunes begin to dwindle. She gets him in with a flashy theatrical crowd and is very soon unfaithful to him, though he is too simple to suspect her; but he knows he is out of his element and is dumbly unhappy. He and Regan drift apart; finally they quarrel. The story ends with Coke's last fight, for which Regan, now his enemy, has coached another likely lad.

Regan is, in a way, the master mind of the team. He does the thinking for both, and he is always hard on Coke. Occasionally he is funny at Coke's expense, but what he wants really is to hurt him:

"That boy's in a good racket," said Regan. "He gets mash notes by the ton."

"Yeah, the kike!" said Jeff.

"Yeah," said Coke; "he don't even play a horn or nothing. Just stands up there and waves a stick. I could do that."

"Sure," said Regan, "but you ain't got nice, pretty hair, and when you smile you look like a rhinoceros."

When Coke gets a laugh, it is equally by accident, but of a different sort:

"Here comes the missus," said Coke, jumping to his feet. "Ain't she got the prettiest pair of legs you ever seen?"

One of Mr. Burnett's excellences as an author consists in this: that he gives the impression of never interfering—either with us or with his characters. At first we are not at all sure whether we trust either of the two main figures (Coke and Regan); gradually we begin to understand and like them, and it dawns on us that they are Damon and Pythias. And Damon and Pythias they remain, to the end and beyond it. Though Regan never has any but hard and cruel words for his simple friend, though Coke in anger once knocks Regan out, and betrays him for a faithless wife, we know, without anyone telling us (in fact, we are told only what happens and what is said, and the upshot of that is anything but friendly) that though Coke may perhaps become a bum and Regan will probably die of drink within the year, neither of them will ever be able to forget the other, and that their friendship is the truest thing in their lives. *Iron Man* is the story of two men who failed because, as they must, they failed each other.

T. S. MATTHEWS

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FALSE SPRING *by Beatrice Kean Seymour* (KNOPF. $2.50)

THE theme of *False Spring* has already been worn quite threadbare; but Beatrice Kean Seymour writes with so much tact and earnestness that our perception of her fundamental triteness is nearly obscured. Essentially, she is concerned with the double standard of sexual morality, and with the effect upon a woman's life of a breach of the conventional code. But she has clothed her thesis in vivid and recognizable characters; she has plotted carefully; and her style—clumsy at times, and without manifest excellence—is nevertheless strong and graphic enough for her purposes.

Her principal character, Virginia Brodie, was the victim of a too-sheltered life. Having met almost no men at all, she fell easily in love with the first man who presented himself, a young novelist already married. Her love for him was one part passion and nine parts curiosity and a desire for freedom, but the recognition of this did not prevent her going to Italy with him. He left her after a time and was killed in South Africa, and Virginia returned to England, shorn of her reputation. She found a situation as governess and fell deeply in love with the young son of the house, but her maiden aunt arose like an avenging Nemesis to reveal her past and to prevent the marriage. After the death of her aunt, Virginia contracted a reasonable and unecstatic marriage with a young professor, whom she discreetly left in ignorance of her history.

The central conflict of Virginia's life reaches a crisis when her son, Carl, falls in love with an admirable young woman who proves to have had a past of her own. Carl's father, liberal enough in theory, revolts at the thought of his son united to an unchaste woman, and forbids their marriage. Virginia sacrifices her own happiness by producing the only effective argument—the analogy of their own marriage, successfully founded upon identical circumstances.

"—AND COMPANY" *by Jean-Richard Bloch* (SIMON & SCHUSTER. $2.50)

THIS fine and ambitious novel, published in incomplete form some years ago in France, has just been brought out in America, in an excellent translation by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, with some words of unmeasured praise by the author's eminent friend, Romain Rolland, and a certain amount of critical fanfare. M. Rolland's praise, high though it is, is very nearly justified by the performance. Jean-Richard Bloch has selected a large theme, in which there is room for him to move freely, in which there is exercise for a vast talent of observation and synthesis, in which there is also the possibility of a more than usually spectacular failure. And, for at least two-thirds of the way, he has brought it off magnificently.

The author has woven together two themes in the course of his novel, each of great complexity and sufficient in itself for the meat of a book: one, which is obliquely suggested, the racial problem of the Jew in a Western civilization; the other, more fully developed, that of a great industrial organization absorbing and defeating, in the end, its creators. These motifs are developed through the career of the Simlers, a family of Alsatian Jews who left a successful weaving business in the Rhineland to settle in France, after the German occupation of Alsace in 1871. They settled in Vendeuvre, a manufacturing town in the west of France, and plunged themselves heavily into debt to start a new factory. They were socially outcast by the other merchants of Vendeuvre, but by concerted action, by shrewdness and organization and industry, they conquered Vendeuvre.

In the end, however, with the growth and maturity of another generation of Simlers, they were themselves neutralized, subordinated to the vast enterprise which the family had created and which had grown bigger than their individual lives. The essential

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problem of the family finally crystallizes in the life of Joseph Simler, who alone attempts, in an instinctive and unvolitional fashion, to escape. He wishes to marry outside his religion, but the opposition of the family and the psychology of his race draw him irrevocably back into the predestined pattern. The characterizations of the book are whole and complete, and the story has both flesh and spirit—movement and depth. It falters in the end because Bloch forgets his duty as an artist in his eagerness as a social philosopher. What he has been willing to suggest through the narrative in the first of his book, he finally brings in a protagonist, a Simler from America, to tell us outright. It is a common flaw, but one which we find hard to forgive because of the book's great promise. "*—and Company*" is a novel richly conceived, but brought to an imperfect birth.

PAGAN INTERVAL *by Frances Winwar* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.50)

WHAT Norman Douglas and Edwin Cerio and, in less degree, George Hummel have done for Capri, Frances Winwar does for Sicily, thinly disguised in *Pagan Interval* as the Island of Ennios. She has adopted a form which seems to have become traditional in this type of whimsically erotic island fiction —the loosely constructed frame-story, centering about a group of major characters and extending itself to include a host of picturesque minor figures and the anecdotes and legends with which they are surrounded. Miss Winwar's style is suave and allusive, in the manner of Norman Douglas. It conceals in its smoothness a good deal of wit, a little graceful obscenity, and a clever smattering of archaeological erudition.

The pagan interval of the title occurs in the life of Mark Blake, a young American scientist who falls victim to the tropical charm of Ennios, its sultry, ominous atmosphere, its high-colored beauty, and the allure of a member of its foreign colony, Clarice Arlan. The tantalizing and inconclusive romance is studded with legends adroitly retold—with the story of Isolde's ingenious infidelity and the tale of Brangwaine's smock, with a poetic version of the rape of Persephone, and a Rabelaisian account of the curious means whereby a humble tailor won for himself the title of Chevalier. *Pagan Interval*, in spite of its meandering form, is more coherent and better plotted than most tales of its sort. The climax of the book is reached in the midst of a Grecian masque staged by the foreign residents of Ennios, when a pyrotechnically realistic volcano boils over, and an earthquake temporarily reorganizes the island.

MARGARET WALLACE

A STRANGER IN PARADISE *by J. Anker Larsen* (KNOPF. $2.50)

THE MAURIZIUS CASE *by Jacob Wassermann* (LIVERIGHT. $3.00)

THE TYRANT *by Ramón del Valle-Inclán* (HOLT. $2.50)

A LARGE number of European writers seem recently to have been visited by a sort of spiritual Locarno. There has been much moral cleansing, much calling out for apostolic Christianity, much apotheosizing of simple goodness and a clear conscience. Only the other day, for example, Franz Werfel, known here as the author of *Class Reunion* and *Maximilian and Juarez*, produced an eight-hundred-page panoramic novel entitled *Barbara* which is, in essence, a passionate return to the unreflecting piety of the heart and a complete denial of the intellectual as well as social values of our day.

Similarly, anti-materialistic sentiment in European writing is nicely embodied in two recently published translations, one from Germany, the other from Denmark. Not that there is any other basis of comparison; for, as we should expect, *The Maurizius Case*, despite its many weaknesses, is a powerful and

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moving psychological study; whereas J. Anker Larsen's *A Stranger in Paradise* is a weak-kneed affair, mawkish, Sunday-schoolish and dull. Its theme is one that has been used with complete success only once in literature—in the New Testament. A young country lad of brilliant parts and bright promise, but who has been blessed in his childhood by pious visions, abandons a career of scholarship and returns to his native village. There, slowly, by force of his sweet, inspired personality, he converts his fellows to his own inner serenity and, in the end, stands as the prime creator of "the village that grew into Paradise". Now, the only stories about saints which have ever seemed convincing to me are those which are quite absurd, such as the miraculous chronicles of *The Golden Legend*. Certainly, the apparatus of the modern novel is quite inadequate to represent a contemporary holy man so that the reader will believe in him; for not only does the spirit of the age operate to reinforce our incredulity, but there is something ridiculously inconclusive about using modern psychology to portray essential goodness. Larsen has not helped his story by injecting into it a false "folksy" flavor and that nauseating whimsicality which consists in telling stories about how St. Peter comes down to earth and tries to sell eternal life to the worldly inhabitants, and so forth. *A Stranger in Paradise* is an evangelical homily that may safely be given as a Sunday-school prize.

Wassermann's book is an entirely different affair. It springs from the same root: revolt against injustice, cruelty and indifference. But whereas Larsen's emotion translates itself into terms of a simplified and sweetish piety, Wassermann's is dark with controlled wrath. It has nobility and bigness; and its boy hero, Etzel Andergast, is a three-dimensional characterization. Wassermann's theme is such a one as Upton Sinclair might have chosen; but his relentless artistic conscience has prevented him, to borrow Edward O'Brien's neat phrase, from selling his birthright for a pot of message. The story of Etzel's thrilling and defiant attempt to release from prison a man unjustly condemned by Etzel's own father becomes far more than a piece of vigorous propaganda. It is a complex study, in unconventional terms, of the eternal opposition between father and son. More than that, in its slow, heavy, ponderous, gradual unravelling of the past of Maurizius and of his prison-psychology, it gives an overwhelming Dostoievskian *chiaroscuro* of the convict-soul.

The book has some grave faults, but they are faults of style rather than conception. It is much too long, for one thing; it is filled with labyrinthine speeches and arguments which do not so much weary the reader as befog him; simple devices such as frequent paragraphing and the splitting-up of over-claused sentences are unknown both to Wassermann and his translator; and, finally, the appearance, very late in the book, of Etzel's mother, is maladroitly handled and not specifically relevant to the story. But these weaknesses pale before the mass and power of the book as a whole, before the gravity of its emotion, and the inexorability of its psychic exploration. *The Maurizius Case* must be read.

The third of the translations lying before me can be dismissed more briefly. Ramón del Valle-Inclán is known in this country only by his *Memoirs of the Marquis de Bradomín*, an amusingly decadent study of an ugly Don Juan, somewhat in the perfumed tradition of the English 'nineties. The present volume is supposed to be a bitterly satiric study of corruption in an imaginary South American republic. The Tyrant, Bauderas, is the center of this corruption. He is a fairly conventional type in modern Spanish literaure: sadistic, cruel, arrogant, grimly humorous, essentially evil. The melodrama of his character is echoed by the melodrama of the action and by an unconvincing attempt at cinematic speed in the arrangement of the incidents. Whatever virtues the book may have in the

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original have undoubtedly been obscured by the translator, who employs the most amazing pseudo-Americanese to convey the colloquialisms of the half-breeds, Indians and Spanish adventurers.

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN

THE SACRED HILL *by Maurice Barrès* (MACAULAY. $2.50)

THOUGH Maurice Barrès has been dead since 1923, many of his books have yet to be translated into English. This first American edition of *La Colline Inspirée* is a splendid example of the translator's art, and one that compares favorably with Scott-Montcrieff's translations. Mr. Malcolm Cowley has successfully turned the dignified modulations of Barrès's French prose into English.

The novel itself is strikingly unusual. For his subject matter M. Barrès went no further than a few years back in time, and found it in the unique character and psychology of Lorraine, which in the 'thirties of the last century gave to history three priests, the brothers Baillard, men of a curious genius and destiny. These men, fired with religious zeal and hyper-patriotism, determined to set Lorraine in a position of some prominence in the world's eyes. They brought to their task a profound belief in Heaven's approval of the venture, and much peasant shrewdness: they built up a religious organization which eventually came under the disapproval of the Church. Practically evicted from their positions, these priests with the aid of a half-mad prophet formulated a new religion.

Barrès's retailing of this history is attended by much sympathy for these three victims of their own illusions. When at the end the cult trails out into nothingness, no futility is conveyed; it is as though the good blood of Lorraine will presently send out yet other magnificent idealists to captivate the imagination, and drive home to the world the superiority of Lotharingian tradition.

LEO KENNEDY

IN THE WILDERNESS *by Sigrid Undset.* (Knopf. $3.00)

TO THOSE who have not read the two former parts of Sigrid Undset's tetralogy, *The Master of Hestviken,* the third part must seem more than a little disconcerting. *In the Wilderness* continues the story of Olav Audunsson after the death of his wife Ingunn, telling of his voyage to England, his worldly temptations there, his return to Hestviken, his quarrel with his son Eirik, and his part in repelling the invasion of the Swedes. For a proper understanding of the story the reader needs to have read the parts which have gone before, inasmuch as the author constantly refers to incidents and characters in the former books. Even the character of Olav himself becomes a little blurred if these incidents and characters are not kept clearly in mind. And yet so powerful is the writing and so superbly does it bring to life the spirit of thirteenth-century Norway, that *In the Wilderness* cannot be neglected by anyone who wishes to know one of the most significant figures in modern literature. The story of Olav's tortured and sin-oppressed soul is, despite its outward trappings and wealth of incident, the core of the book.

On the surface Sigrid Undset is a historical novelist, but extraordinary as she is in evoking a past age her real genius is in the intensity of her moral fervor. Almost alone among modern masters of the novel the Norwegian novelist is first and foremost a Christian and a Catholic. In an age of scepticism and denial she believes and affirms. Her characters sin and doubt and suffer, but always in their hearts there burns a sacred flame. Hawthorne would have understood them and, for all his despair, Melville. Sigrid Undset believes in a settled standard of morality, in the virtue of self-denial, in the nobility of struggle and of sacrifice—and yet she remains triumphantly vital. She is not a realist, a behaviorist, or a Freudian, yet she is intensely modern, more modern than any of these gentry, because her

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modernity is a modernity which will remain. It will remain because the spirit which she expresses is universal.

GRENVILLE VERNON

## A BACKGROUND FOR CAROLINE *by Helen Ashton* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

FOR the few who like a long, well-written, leisurely novel, this is a book to be cherished. On the face of it, the story is the life of Caroline Hill from her birth in 1877, through a gawky uncomfortable girlhood, a strange emotional awakening as a war-nurse, a happy marriage late in life, to poise and peace at the end. But somehow it is, all in all, more than that. The author has sympathy, discernment and a magnificent control of her medium. Scenes that are usually the most difficult to get over are done in this book with the utmost simplicity.

In the midst of the storm and stress of modern theories and modern technique, such a quiet unassuming novel gives one embarrassing doubts. The recent revolution in literature may have been unnecessary and not quite so thorough as we have believed. Though it is harrowing to think of it, fifteen years ago one would have said that this book was art; and somehow it still is.

## THREE AGAINST THE WORLD *by Sheila Kaye-Smith* (DUTTON. $2.50)

WHEN this novel was first published in England, about sixteen years ago, it was said, no doubt, to show promise. But now, with all its successors in mind, we must view it as interesting juvenilia. As such, it is a remarkable forecast of all the author's power and shortcomings. She must have begun with the naïve idea that to write a novel one used all the characters and incidents that one admired most in other novels. And one wrote as nearly like the other novels as one could. She wrote as if she had just discovered words and loved them dearly. There are the heights of ecstasy and the depths of tragedy that youth always finds in the world. In fact, the book is so youthful that one is almost disarmed. But it is all a soul-state. And the art of fiction, though no one can be sure what it is exactly, is certainly not that.

Yet it was written by Sheila Kaye-Smith, so the book is a bit more than adolescent squirmings. Her stock characters stir as if they were about to live. The heroine is a faint pencil sketch of Joanna Godden, who has now taken her place among the great women of fiction. Even in this book, the author's love and understanding for her locale were so strong that she was able to write of the countryside with a power almost equal to that of her later novels.

Therein, as we have said, lies the interest of this book. For characterization and plot have always been a little unsure in Miss Kaye-Smith's hands. In some of her recent work she has approached the weakness that is so glaring in this one. But in this book, as in all her others, there is a vividness and a genuineness in her writing about the fields and the lanes and the lowering skies that have won her a high place among contemporary novelists.

PAUL ALLEN

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# BIOGRAPHY

KING SPIDER *by D. B. Wyndham Lewis* (COWARD-MCCANN. $5.00)

Louis XI goes shuffling down the years. A mean, peak-nosed, stoop-shouldered, shabbily-gowned figure, wearing a string of little images on his hat, he emerges from that bloody twilight which preluded the dawn of nationalism in France as from an archaic stained window, grasping between spider fingers the close webs of countless political schemes; treacherously shifting alliances, and spreading terror by the cruelty of his vengeance and reprisals; a man by turns magnificently brave and superstitiously craven.

This portrait of an ogre is the romantic creation and recreation of many generations of novelists whose morbidity has inclined to fire and fury; it is ridiculously spectacular and it is false. D. B. Wyndham Lewis, still fresh from the success of his *Villon* of last season, has issued a rebuttal of such story-book falsification in a biography as complete and as fascinating as his study of the vagabond poet. *King Spider* introduces an unfamiliar Louis, but one whose behavior is well in keeping with common sense. He emerges as the shrewd, intellectual master of a land ravaged by a century of warfare, and the uprooter of feudalism; a ruler preoccupied with uniting the kingdom by fair or dishonest measures, and concerned for the welfare of his people. Under such treatment Louis XI assumes human and logical proportions. The stripping away of those theatrical properties with which the monarch has been burdened reveals a personality of no extraordinary viciousness and more than ordinary virtue. It is meritoriously done. The pages are rich with a departed glamour and color; by culling right and left from contemporary records, the biographer has recaptured faithfully the atmosphere of the time and brought his beloved fifteenth century to the doorstep of our twentieth. Joan and Charles move through the narrative; Charles of Burgundy and English Talbot; Gilles de Rais and his company of sadists. And for a little space, shrilling his iambic invectives, Master François Villon.

The Catholicism of Wyndham Lewis has particularly equipped him to interpret this period. The mysticism which inspired Joan of Arc, and stimulated the confidence of Charles VII; and the bedrock of faith upon which the whole medieval idea is built—these are qualities without which a historian of the Middle Ages is handicapped in his grasping after first principles. It may be objected that Wyndham Lewis has concerned himself with the intimate details of Louis's career to the exclusion of some of political moment. But if the first duty of a biographer is to reassemble the personality of his subject adequately, then the present one has admirably succeeded.

LEO KENNEDY

PETER THE GREAT *by Georges Oudard* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $3.50)

PETER THE GREAT *by Stephen Graham* (SIMON & SCHUSTER. $3.00)

QUITE SUDDENLY out of the clear blue come these two goodly-sized biographies of one of the most bewildering and intelligent monsters that Russia ever produced. It is safe to say that the general reader will have very little previous knowledge of Peter the Great.



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The name may be dimly familiar. A few students may know that Peter's second wife was that Catherine who became Empress of all the Russias. Yet Peter was one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of all the Czars. It was he who made possible the great Russia, the Holy Russia, of the nineteenth century. He took the great sleeping bear with the dreaming fanatical eyes and the bloody claws and turned its mystical and savage face toward Europe, awakened it to the pulse of modern time, created for it a navy and an army and a centralized government. He was a great experimenter, a great innovator, a force courageous enough to open the way to an intelligent Westernization of the Russias in spite of the obsessive desire for isolation that permeated the Princes and Bishops of the steppes. He was intelligently vigorous, strong-minded, essentially noble on a grand scale and intuitively understanding; yet at the same time he was savage and bloody, a barbarous Tartar at heart, sensual, and fantastic in his sadism. The curious amalgam of conflicting characteristics that made up his extraordinary nature give him the stature and gigantic personality of some unbelievable Gargantua. Surrounded by his slaves, his grotesque dwarfs, his mock-Pope and his burlesque religious orgies he was manifestly a madman; yet there was another side to him, the side that reveals him as a prophetic and farsighted statesman. To reconcile the antagonistic urges in his mentality is difficult. This colossal drunkard and sensualist, this terrible fellow who presented to his wife the preserved head of her lover, is a fascinating subject for a biography.

With any documentation at all the biographer would be hard put to it to write an uninteresting book; and it may be affirmed at once that both M. Oudard and Mr. Stephen Graham have written entertaining volumes. The differences between these two biographies are mainly those of construction, detail and actual prose. Alas, the writer in English suffers manifestly when his *Peter the Great* is placed beside that of the Frenchman. M. Oudard's volume is better knit, more dramatically conceived and more sustained in its ability to keep the reader fascinated. There is an implied philosophy of humanity here. Mr. Graham's book is not so good, although it is a better volume than he has turned out in years. Perhaps it is true that the French mind with its clarity is better adapted to the composition of biographies concerning such amoral and inexplicable characters as Peter the Great. There is never a moral implication in such work, no thin-lipped approach to the objectionable divagations of the subject. Anglo-Saxon influences in Mr. Graham's approach manifest themselves more than once. When he writes: "But the anecdotes and the wit of these carouses would hardly charm the ears today", he is not writing biography; he is implying a moral judgment on the time of Peter the Great. M. Oudard preserves the impartiality of some enthusiastic scientist studying the private life of a cannibalistic beetle. It simply does not occur to him to click his teeth and shake his head sadly over the ferociousness of his characters. It is true that he possesses decided opinions about Russia and airs them at the end of his book. "Muscovy has gone back to her natural native barbarism. Faithful to the eternal great dream of the old races of Asia, she is waiting in patience for the opportunity to hurl herself once more upon the Europe she hates." Thus M. Oudard dismisses all the reforms of Peter the Great and declares the Russian soul incapable of evolution.

HERBERT GORMAN

BEETHOVEN *by Robert Haven Schauffler* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. TWO VOLS. $10.00)

IT IS hard to approach Beethoven without enthusiasm—the man was so vital, his vices so human—his achievement so warm-hearted; and, above all, music lends itself to rhapsody. The most direct and yet almost the most mathematical of the arts, it is often either

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treated analytically for the specialist or so wrapped in layers of sweet confection that the subject is quite lost from sight.

Mr. Schauffler is conscious of this difficulty and struggles intelligently against it. If his love for Beethoven leads him to eulogize, he quickly catches himself and makes no bones about Beethoven's having an impossible temper and a suspicious nature that led him to insult and repel his closest friends.

In this biography the emphasis is upon his rôle as a liberator of music. The hardened forms of German classicism had already begun to tinkle hollowly. There were already premonitions of change, the time was ripe for musical adventure. Beethoven's development was gradual, embracing what was sound in Haydn and Mozart, adding a new flexibility and dignity, and reaching a more individual and personal kind of expression. This, according to the author, was the genius of Beethoven. Once and for all, he combined classicism and romanticism into something far greater than a mere happy medium.

Mr. Schauffler writes brightly, perhaps at times a little too brightly. He has something to say to both layman and professional musician and is carried along by genuine enthusiasm for his subject.

H. R. HAYS

DAMPIER, EXPLORER AND BUCCANEER *by Clennell Wilkinson* (HARPERS. $4.00)

DAMPIER, explorer, buccaneer, hydrographer, diarist, is on the tapis again and under interrogation by Clennell Wilkinson. His several voyages around the world, his adventures as a hardwood-cutter in Campeachy Bay, the voyage of the *Roebuck* and subsequent court martial, and the final voyages as a pilot with Woodes Rogers, come under the author's research to determine what sort of man this Dampier was, as well as can be judged by a discerning analysis of the man's own writings and the records of contemporaries.

This is that most delightful sort of biography, which, without making false assumptions on insufficient evidence, or setting out to muck-rake or debunk a great character, gives us Dampier as much through his reservations as through his confidences, and it is written with few exceptions from a remarkably unbiased viewpoint—the viewpoint of a scholar and not of a special pleader. Mr. Wilkinson produces a fact and while confident of his own conclusions, seems to say to the reader: "Well, what do you think?" And this without being falsely confidential or basely ingratiating.

One of the exceptions has to do with a Mr. Hacke, a friend of Captain Sharp's, who edited Ringrose's journal and took pains to make Sharp and not Dampier the hero of their common exploits, with the result that Mr. Wilkinson's back hair rises slightly and he mutters, "the inevitable Hacke" or "Hacke rushes in—", in a most interesting manner. Evidences of the common humanity of serious people are always highly diverting.

The point of Dampier's unfitness to command, due to his possessing a rather sulky, dogmatic and undisciplined nature, is well made, but I think the author testifies falsely in defence of the buccaneers, in order to distinguish them from pirates. The fact is that they did capture ships of neutral nations, raped the cargo, and murdered the crews. There may be a legal, but there is certainly no practical difference between this and piracy.

ROBERT L. ROE

JOHN KNOX *by Edwin Muir* (VIKING. $3.50)

JOHN KNOX was one of the first Puritans, and also one of the most excessive. He left his followers a model, and his enemies an effigy. His life casts a light, however grim, on Scotland's history, on England under Cromwell and Queen Victoria, on New England and the States schooled by New Eng-

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landers. Here, for once, it is worth while noticing the subtitle: *Portrait of a Calvinist.*

From the first Mr. Muir analyzes his subject with the insight of a ruthless relative. He is himself a Scotchman and serious. He surveys bitterly the influence of a Puritan religion upon his country. He does not lack an inclination to dogmatize; his *Structure of the English Novel* (1929) is hardly less rigid than the Nietzschean aphorisms of *We Moderns* (1918). Moreover, he has as sharp a style as any contemporary critic.

In the biography John Knox does not change; he merely hardens. At the beginning he has already renounced the Catholic faith for a Lutheran gospel. Somehow he has acquired a will to power and a perfect ability to see only his side of a question. The remainder of his life is a constant fanatical war to carry out the will of a God whom he unconsciously confuses with himself. He is a type, a humour, or even a caricature. Whether he tries to learn Greek or debates insolently with Mary Stuart, he never surprises us, but only becomes more distinct and more oppressive.

This distinctness, after its first effect, ends in establishing a number of doubts. We feel that we are reading not about John Knox, but about "a Calvinist", and an imaginary one. As for this typical Protestant, we should like to see him treated with more tolerance, or else his opposites with more severity. Either more credit should be given, for instance, to his reorganization of the town of Berwick; or his critic before Mary Stuart should not collapse into a sentimental gentleman and overlook the Queen's wretched incompetence. As do many types in fiction and biography, at first the villain seems true, and then a distortion of the truth.

The biography sets out to do this: "to give a critical account of a representative Calvinist and Puritan". It sets out to analyze, to depict, to define. But it quickly passes from definition into denunciation. There it for the most part remains. It seldom mentions John Knox without irony, or scorn, or fury. It studies bigotry one-sidedly, and returns vehemence for vehemence. As biography, it is not unlike Lytton Strachey's portrait of Arnold of Rugby, which Mr. Muir has called "excellent satire". Such critical accounts are indeed illuminating, but they leave the reader to do most of the judging.

JOHN KEMMERER

CASANOVA: HIS KNOWN AND UNKNOWN LIFE *by S. Guy Endore* (JOHN DAY. $5.00)

IN AN era of facile biography, we may be grateful for an account so careful and loving, so orderly and authentic, as this Mr. S. Guy Endore has given us of Giacomo Casanova, Chevalier de Seingalt. The problems Mr. Endore has encountered, the mass of material he has sifted and evaluated, the researches he has undertaken, are almost endless. In the midst of his gigantic task, he has preserved a balance and freshness one cannot help but admire. As a Casanovist, Mr. Endore ranks midway between the defenders of the great amorist, who have been lured by his paganism into ardent and often unreasonable partisanship, and the scholars, who have involved themselves in the labyrinthine inquiries afforded by the truth or falsity of the *Memoirs,* to the exclusion of the color and vitality still inherent in what is perhaps the greatest of all self-portraits. Having steered an incorruptible course between the two traditional schools of Casanovan criticism, Mr. Endore avoids a third and more modern pitfall. He has advanced no nimble theories, no psychoanalytic catch-phrases, to account for the great adventurer of the eighteenth century who has already so ably and richly accounted for himself.

In the construction of his biography, Mr. Endore has followed the *Memoirs*, adopting, where it is possible to do so, Casanova's own story of his life. This was wise, for the sheer dramatic power of Casanova's confessions would be difficult for even the most inspired

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biographer to match. Where Casanova's own statements run counter to the findings of historical research, Mr. Endore has interpolated brief, critical investigations, calculated to modify our impressions of the man, without breaking the thread of the narrative or sacrificing the color and impulse of the original account. After 1774, at which point the *Memoirs* abruptly come to an end, Mr. Endore has had recourse to a variety of notes, documents, reports, letters and government dispatches, to complete the history of Casanova's last years, when "the charlatan, the braggart, the liar, forger, adulterer, seducer, jailbird, and student of the humanities" was living out his old age as librarian in the castle of Count Waldstein at Dux. These final chapters are perhaps less interesting than the spectacular adventures which Casanova attributed to himself, but they complete the portrait in a manner infinitely creditable to Mr. Endore. In them appears the pathetic and credible figure of the aged Casanova—a figure which explains in retrospect the lavish and dazzling personage of the *Memoirs.*

MARGARET WALLACE

MARIE ANTOINETTE: THE PLAYER QUEEN *by John Garbér Palache* (LONGMANS, GREEN. $5.00)

CONSIDERING his treatment of his subject, Mr. Palache has selected rather a misleading subtitle for his book. Marie Antoinette was the "Player Queen" only so long as the frivolity of the foreign court, in which she nominally ruled, imposed on her the rôle of leader of the revels. Her sense of security and her confidence in those she trusted kept her unaware of actual conditions. Only when the Bastille fell and she faced the guillotine did her essential nobility and courage become apparent. Faced by her judges, she could keep her wits nimble and her head high—she could be in reality the queen she no longer was in name.

Marie Antoinette was unfortunately the daughter of an Empress who, despite a real love for her child, saw in her a useful pawn in her political game. Marie Theresa always kept Ambassador Mercy-Argenteau at the elbow of the young ruler, urging the claims of Austria under the guise of being a mother's counsellor.

"Be not frivolous like the French," wrote the Empress herself to her daughter, "but glory in being a good German. If you are cordial to my subjects, you will be praised not blamed."

In her new home the girl had found a king subtly aware that the "deluge" would succeed him and interested only in his Du Barry. She found a husband who ate heavily on his wedding night so that he might sleep well, who hunted all day and who had finally to be reminded that marriage is intended to prolong the race. He was no help to her. If she was cheered by the people, she thought all was well. When they jeered at her, she understood as little the reason for the changed reception.

But when, on the morning of her execution, someone tried to encourage Marie Antoinette, she could say truly: "I have learned bravery in long years of woe, and it is not their ending that shall find me weak, for I should have more need of heroism were I still to live".

On high-heeled shoes she ran up the platform steps to her death, and she apologized to the executioner for treading on his toes.

With no attempt at partisanship Mr. Palache has done the memory of Marie Antoinette a service. Even had she been a stateswoman like her mother, which she was not, it is doubtful if she could have stemmed or even dammed the rising tide of France's resentment against its kings. Like Hamlet she was born in a time out of joint. She could not save the Bourbons, but she did at the end prove the regality of her blood, if not of her reign.

NORAH MEADE

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# ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

## THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR: A STUDY IN LITTERÆ INHUMANIORES *by Norman Foerster* (UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS. $1.00)

PROFESSOR FOERSTER, scholar and critic in American literature, distinguished representative from the middle generation of the "new humanists", has drawn with gusto a depressing picture of American scholarship in the field of letters. He contends that "Since the time when Carlyle somewhat romantically lamented the arrival of the Age of Mechanism, literary scholarship has lived in the shadow of science, has been permeated with its spirit, has taken over its methods, has assimilated even its vocabulary". Men of letters have been eager to achieve an objectivity in their studies to parallel the objectivity of the natural sciences. This they have sought in linguistics, in detailed investigations of literary history, in historical studies only by vaguest inference related to literature, in Freudian biographies of poets. Eschewing the development of critical philosophies, the application of standards, the assignment of values, they have given themselves over wholeheartedly to the cult of the fact. According to Foerster's indictment:

"Some of our leading literary scholars, and most of the rank and file, fearful of the broad interpretations and reinterpretations that history involves, prefer the safer task of contributing new materials for future historians. Instead of having a due respect for facts as the necessary basis for sound knowledge and the higher activities of scholarship, they appear to worship facts as facts, things as things. Employing an expert mechanical technique, they give themselves up to a blind pursuit of facts, an aimless accumulation of small additions to the sum of knowledge." They possess a mystical faith that each item thus collected will, at some future day, prove indispensable to learning. "Whether the bricks will ever be used, whether they are the particular bricks that will be needed by future builders, does not, in their mystical faith in the brick, concern them." We are warned that the critic with his sense of proportion must select from the millions of "facts" which might be known those which human beings find worth knowing. Foerster would join à Kempis in praying, *Da mihi, Domine, scire quod sciendum est.* The evil result of unmitigated activity on the part of researchers is that "We [scholars] spend our days and nights not in studying the authors whom we profess to be concerned with, but in desperately 'keeping up with' other scholars immersed in literary history".

The literary scholar fears to attempt criticism, whether it be "subjective or objective, impressionistic or dogmatic"—indeed, he distinguishes no schools of criticism. He contrasts the *knowledge* of the scientist and the scholar with the *speculation* of the religionist, the dilettante, the critic. Yet he cannot escape from criticism: he who condemns criticism is himself a critic; the researcher is operating upon a theory of values quite as much as is the man of letters. The critic *malgré lui* may be a good or a bad critic, central or eccentric, but critic he cannot elect not to be. In point of fact, we are told, the typical scholar is part scientist and part impressionist, subconsciously convinced that vigorous factualism in the one authorizes him to give free rein to fancy in the other. As against this bifurcation into fact and



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fancy, Mr. Foerster reaffirms his humanistic faith in the existence of objective standards in literature, "Those constants in literature and literary theory in which reside the standards that defy the varying provincialisms of the ages of history".

Professor Foerster attributes this cult of the fact to the influence of the German universities, and urges that the time has now come to turn from German "scientism" to the literary scholarship of France, with its balance of industry and intelligence. This concluding chapter suggests changes in the conduct of graduate study and the requirements for graduate degrees which would utilize the humanistic experience of the French. The A.M., to be given after two years of study devoted to literature, philosophy, and history, should constitute the "teaching degree". The doctorate might well be given in consequence of distinguished work either of the scientific or the critical character. In any event, the degree should be given, as in France, only after the attainment of his intellectual majority by the student. "Within eight or ten years after becoming candidates, they might hope to have produced a piece of distinguished publication demonstrating their power for scientific or critical scholarship in the judgment of the academic world. The standard should be as high as real distinction is uncommon, and to assure such a standard national committees of award should be set up for each type of doctorate."

All this, both diagnosis and prescription, is to be taken as indication that Mr. Foerster finds distressing the current dichotomy of the literary world into the professors, who have much erudition in literary history but are inadequately acquainted with contemporary literature and afraid to venture any critical judgments upon it, and the free-lance reviewers, who learn while they earn, are all foreground and no background, judge with the audacity of those who have no position to sustain, no reputation for sanity to lose. Why must one choose between the pedant and the journalist? Mr. Foerster hopes that the alternatives will not remain mutually exclusive. He desiderates the scholar who is also (without any abatement of his scholarship) the man of letters, the man of letters who is also (without any diminution of his sensibility) too scrupulous to sacrifice truth to rhetorical effect.

Mr. Foerster is not, needless to say, the first to urge the need of scholar-critics who shall know before judging and know in order to judge. He is in the direct tradition of Matthew Arnold and James Russell Lowell and Irving Babbitt; and *The American Scholar* parallels in general position *Criticism in the Making*, recently published by the distinguished French scholar-critic, M. Cazamian. But Mr. Foerster urges his position with special relevance to the current and local academic scene, not sparing veiled personalities and "topical allusions" in his endeavor to say something which shall "come home" to his professional readers. This work perhaps betrays some haste as well as heat: a little less evangelical zeal might become the name of humanist. Mr. Foerster would agree, well content to sacrifice some degree of decorum to the exigencies of a controversy quite as pungent as profitable.

AUSTIN WARREN

## CATHOLICISM AND CHRISTIANITY: A VINDICATION OF PROGRESSIVE PROTESTANTISM *by Cecil John Cadoux* (DIAL PRESS. $6.00)

ROMAN CATHOLIC controversialists have called the Bible a nose of wax, which any man can twist as he pleases. *Catholicism and Christianity* presents evidence that the Catholic Church has not only twisted the Bible, but also the dicta of the Church Fathers, of the Councils and of the Popes. Professor Cadoux, the well known New Testament scholar, has here accomplished a task of greater magnitude than anything of its kind since the appearance of Karl von Hase's *Handbuch der*

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*protestantischen Polemik gegen die Römisch-Katholische Kirche* in 1862. There is no book in English which so thoroughly and so fairly examines Papal Catholicism's claim to be the one and only authentic Christianity. According to the author, the history of persecution and the modern apologies for it, the doctrine of eternal punishment and Rome's ethical attainments prove her claim to special holiness and to infallibility in morals to be a hollow sham; the Catholic theory of authority is philosophically unsound; and the views of history and the methods of historical criticism to which Rome is committed are untruthful. Free Church Protestantism is offered as a more authentic type of Christianity since it eschews a hierarchic and sacerdotal machinery. Its standard is the personality and message of Christ, intrinsically self-authenticating. Its method is historical, rather than dogmatic. It rests on a concrete appeal to the whole moral and intellectual personality and not on the overweening private judgment which succumbs before an illusory infallibility.

The Catholic, viewing the development of Protestantism, may well reply that Christ Himself becomes only another nose for the twisting.—

"Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!"

JAMES LUTHER ADAMS

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# A VARIED SHELF

NO ENEMY *by Ford Madox Ford* (MACAULAY. $2.50)

USING the technique made familiar to the readers of the remarkable Tietjens tetralogy, four novels which are still a long way from the appreciation they deserve from the discriminating public, Mr. Ford has written in *No Enemy* an odd chapter of autobiography. The book covers the years of the war, when the author wore the uniform of His Britannic Majesty; its reach is backward into the years that preceded the outbreak of the struggle and forward into the years that have followed. It contains much beautiful writing, particularly in the earlier chapters, where Mr. Ford has set down the love of his native England, the love of a land as distinguished from the love of one's people. This is a theme which I once heard delightfully embroidered by the Spanish poet and novelist, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, who has a passion for the Galician countryside; he said, as Mr. Ford does, that it was the perdurable features of the landscape that bit deep into his heart; that he missed, not people, but hillsides, trees, rushing brooks, and the sea.

The principal character in *No Enemy*, which has the peculiar quality of reading as if it were the thinking aloud of a sensitive and intelligent person, who thought according to clearly-defined literary patterns, is Gringoire, borrowed, of course, from an imaginary poet to whom Alphonse Daudet addressed his delightful fable, *La Chèvre de M. Séguin*. Mr. Ford's Gringoire is engaged during the book in trying, by living in a tumbledown cottage and cultivating his garden, cooking with his own hands the products thereof, to outwit the wolf that finally ate the goat of M. Séguin. With him is the charming Madame Sélysette as a companion, and someone else called in the book the Compiler, who sets down the wandering thoughts of the poet upon life, and particularly upon the war. Mr. Ford is Gringoire and the Compiler, of course.

Mr. Ford's trick of dropping a phrase or a sentence and then picking it up again many pages later, and dropping it to pick it up again still later does not make for the easiest of reading; this convoluted manner of telling a story, which Conrad developed to such a high degree, has its handicaps, but in the hands of a craftsman such as Mr. Ford its handling is bound to elicit admiration from all who are interested in the mechanics of writing. It is like the work of a weaver over a difficult and complicated pattern which does not emerge until the last knot is tied, and then one is bound to stand back a little breathless at the skill with which the threads have been put together. There are few people living who know so well how to write as this author; even when his mannerisms become irritating, and even when, as in the present volume, his repetitions and doublings-back seem too patently added for effect, there is still the flow of his prose to enjoy, and still that curious and peculiar gift of evoking sensation and touching chords of memory.

To this reviewer after one reading—perhaps it deserves and needs more—*No Enemy* seems a long way from being so good a piece of work as any one of the novels in the Tietjens series, providing, of course, that one may measure a sort of *tour de force* of autobiography against a novel. It has not the charm of the life of Conrad that raised such a stir and called forth such denunciations



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from the Conradians, nor do I believe it can be re-read with anything like the pleasure that may be had from that distinguished volume. There are times when the content of *No Enemy* seems to run thin, when the style is almost too facile, as if it carried no particular burden of thought. But it has its moments of impressive beauty, and whether one altogether approves of it or not, there is always a feeling that its author is a master craftsman . . . and how many of these are there in this day of infant prodigies?

HERSCHEL BRICKELL

HORACE WALPOLE AND MADAME DU DEFFAND *by Anna de Koven* (APPLETON. $3.00)

LESS straining for effect and better selection of pertinent fact would have greatly aided this rather inchoate account of an eighteenth-century friendship. Anna de Koven apparently thought, by a brief analysis of their ancestry, environment and correspondence, to explain the strange relationship that was formed between Horace Walpole at the age of fifty and the blind Madame du Deffand, aged seventy, and that continued until her death many years later. But the result is an aggregation of quotations, prefaced by what purports to be some family and national history, and interspersed with connecting and often irritating paragraphs.

The relationship between Walpole and Madame du Deffand may be described in the language of eighteenth-century French society as an *amitié amoureuse*. The history of that century, says Sebastian Mercier, was "full of these relations where love, in the exact sense of the word, played no part; where the woman was a companion to the man, at once faithful and unselfish, more intelligent and more devoted than a friend of his own sex".

The friendship in this case had to be maintained by correspondence, for Walpole's visits to Paris were few and far between. When in the company of his "old lady", under the influence of her charm, her wit and intelligence, he was unaware of the Gallic effusiveness of her temperament, and they were happy. But when he returned to his castle at Strawberry Hill and to the damp chill of the English climate, the effusiveness committed to paper roused the nervous dread of ridicule which she considered his greatest fault. He was aware that their letters might be opened and read in transit, and he feared the distortion of her phrases by the vulgar-minded and the laughter that might be roused by knowledge of her age and his. He accused her of "indiscretions and romantic extravagances" and begged her to be more reserved. Of course, he hurt her. His caviling and her sensitive recoil from it led Sainte-Beuve to call their relationship a "long misunderstanding". She was dead before he realized how much his heart, as well as his head, was involved in the friendship she gave so freely.

NORAH MEADE

OUR SINGING STRENGTH *by Alfred Kreymborg* (COWARD-MCCANN. $5.00)

SOMETHING has been accomplished in this book that has been considerably needed for many years. Mr. Kreymborg has, with complete success, outlined the growth of American poetry, from its first days till 1930.

The book is rather terrifyingly complete. Poets one had nearly forgotten, in the welter of modern schools and theories, such as Edward Rowland Sill, are given many pages, well equipped with illustrative material, to show that America did have poets of merit before 1912. Six hundred and forty-three pages, including index; and in that space the author has included thorough valuations of all the great and near-great figures from Anne Bradstreet to Robinson Jeffers, and more than adequate mention of every other poet in American history who ever had any claim to attention. It is a titanic work, and

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one, with few exceptions, excellently executed. Over half the book is devoted to the period from 1912 to the present. While this shows a lack of historical balance, it nevertheless provides an excellent comparison in values ancient and contemporary. Without doubt there have been more and greater minor poets from 1912 to the present than there were from 1620 to 1912; and Kreymborg, with his intimate knowledge of all the various movements from the date which sometime will be known as the American Poetic Renaissance till the present, and his thoroughly unbiased, tolerant, and experienced critical apparatus, is one of the best living men to evaluate the living and the recently dead. Eliot he appreciates in himself, and depreciates for his influence. Whitman and Jeffers he sees as America's greatest and most representative poets; a theory the expatriates (at home and abroad) will take delight in jeering at, but one which has considerable reason behind it: they both are at once our most individual poets and our most universal prophets. For all the smaller poets of our decade, he has wise criticism and a really unusual sense of comparative values. It takes a man of some stature to sort and tabulate and evaluate more than six hundred poets successfully!

He does not slight the past, even though so much less space is given to our nineteenth-century poets. His essay on Poe is not one of the most successful in the book; but his defence of Bryant is excellent. The present writer feels that his chapter on Emily Dickinson is one of the finest appreciations of her magic art that have appeared. And his ten-page explanation and defence of Anna Hempstead Branch's "Nimrod" makes that poem seem a great dramatic epic, and its author one of the best of America's woman poets.

Some critic should issue a pamphlet on Kreymborg himself for buyers of the book to slip into its correct place. And that pamphlet would not be one-tenth so deprecatory as Kreymborg is about himself!

GROFF CONKLIN

## THE STORY OF SAN MICHELE *by Axel Munthe* (DUTTON. $3.75)

HERE is a volume of flavorous reminiscences of a sort we too seldom find—possibly because most writers, being no more than human, never achieve the necessary detachment. Axel Munthe, a Swedish doctor, a pupil of Charcot and a disciple of Pasteur, with an international reputation for the successful treatment of nervous diseases, with a variety of coveted decorations from the grateful countries of Europe, retired from active practice to live at his villa on Anacapri. Because he was afflicted with insomnia and the approaching loss of his eyesight, he wrote, in the long hours when he could not sleep, *The Story of San Michele*. And the story of San Michele, the villa which he had lovingly designed and built upon the site of the ancient villa of Tiberius, is the story of his own life.

Dr. Munthe apologizes, in his introduction, for having created his story, not as he had meant to do, from the precious marble fragments of the villa of Tiberius, but only from some fragments of clay from his own broken life—that is, for having written an account so dyed by his own personality and so burdened with his own scattered reflections. But in this circumstance, for which he apologizes, lies the charm and usefulness of his book. Without the philosophical cast which his speculations lend it, his narrative would still have been an absorbing one. It is laden with choice anecdotes from his colorful career, with tales of Charcot's lectures and Pasteur's laboratories, with scenes from the practice of famous surgeons, with descriptions of Naples during a cholera epidemic and Messina during a week of terrific earthquakes, with gruesome stories—almost unbelievable—from his practice, of a sort which every veteran physician can tell, but which few allow to circulate outside their clubs.

We learn how Dr. Munthe invented a fashionable and lucrative, but somewhat indefinite, disease called colitis, how he made a

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fortune from it, and how he confined the Vicomte Maurice, a hated but perfectly healthy rival for the affections of a pretty Countess, to bed with it for a week. We learn how he performed an embalmment upon the body of a young compatriot, sealed it in a lead casket and started with it on the way home to Sweden, in company with a professional "Leichenbegleiter" who was rendering similar service to the body of a Russian general, and of the distressing but hilarious consequences which defeated his kindly intentions.

These things make an uncommonly entertaining narrative. But there is much more to *The Story of San Michele* than entertainment. It is a valuable summary of the opinions and conclusions of a trained observer of life. Dr. Munthe combines, with wider opportunities for study than are given to most men, a highly practical and specialized intellect, the sympathy and sensitiveness of a Scandinavian mystic, and a perennially youthful curiosity and openness of mind.

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN *by Virginia Woolf* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

THIS BOOK is the result of a lecture which Virginia Woolf delivered at Cambridge, before a gathering of college women, upon the comprehensive and somewhat indefinite topic "Women and Fiction". The title, as Mrs. Woolf indicates, might mean anything —"it might mean women and what they are like; or it might mean women and the fiction that they write; or it might mean women and the fiction that is written about them; or it might mean that somehow all three are inextricably mixed together. . . ." Reflecting upon the vastness of the material thus spread before her, Mrs. Woolf decided "to offer . . . an opinion upon one minor point—a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that . . . leaves the problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved".

Having thus clearly defined and limited her argument, Mrs. Woolf contrives, in the course of it, to say a good deal about the true nature of women and of fiction, and to say it extremely gracefully and wittily. There is nothing particularly novel in any of her contentions. Indeed, most of them have been accepted as comparatively unneedful of statement since John Stuart Mill first confronted the world with the same thesis. Mrs. Woolf has traced the reasons for the failure of women to create enduring literary masterpieces. She has found these reasons in their lack of financial independence and intellectual freedom, in their special and fettering obligations to homes and families, in their lack of opportunity to observe and experience life. More recently, for some of these handicaps which have been, at least partially, removed, has been substituted a sex-consciousness as destructive to creative activity as the old habits of sex-inhibition. Mrs. Woolf holds, in the terms of Coleridge's definition, that the artistic mind must be androgynous; and this, above all, women's minds have never been allowed to become.

Thus, women must have incomes and rooms of their own, and they must have time and freedom to remove from their minds the invidious consciousness of sex, before our literature may be enriched by the untouched half of human experience and observation which is peculiar to women. Smoothly and wittily, with ancedote and incident, Mrs. Woolf has driven home an argument which very few persons will care to dispute vigorously. One thing is clear. Too much of the literature of feminism in the past has been in the hands of men, or of women who have successfully assumed a typically masculine point of view. Mrs. Woolf's undeniably feminine discourse, pleasant, shrewd, sharply understanding, gives one a notion of the power of the argument which may be developed when women of Mrs. Woolf's talent put their minds to the subject.

MARGARET WALLACE

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# THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE, LIFE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, IN COÖPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF AMERICA

One of the things which everybody believes but which are not true is that the practice of journalism, notably daily newspaper journalism, is a good training for the literary worker. A reporter has to write; ergo, reporters easily become authors. As well say that writing advertising copy is good training for a poet! Which comments were excited by contemplation of the names of Walter Lippmann and Claude G. Bowers in juxtaposition in this month's score, since they are the editors, respectively, of the morning and the evening editions of the New York *World*.

Both of these gentlemen, it is true, are competent journalists. So, too, is Francis Hackett, who made his American reputation in the columns of *The New Republic*, where Walter Lippmann also won his spurs. That is very far removed from writing for the daily press as practised by the general run of newspaper men. It is the sort of journalism which Lytton Strachey also practises. Among the novelists here represented only one, Ernest Hemingway, ever earned a living as a working newspaper man, and he escaped while still young.

—F. P. S.

## NOVELS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT | *Erich Maria Remarque* | LITTLE, BROWN |
| 2. WHITEOAKS OF JALNA | *Mazo de la Roche* | LITTLE, BROWN |
| 3. ROPER'S ROW | *Warwick Deeping* | KNOPF |
| 4. THEY STOOPED TO FOLLY | *Ellen Glasgow* | DOUBLEDAY, DORAN |
| 5. THE GALAXY | *Susan Ertz* | APPLETON |
| 6. SCARLET SISTER MARY | *Julia Peterkin* | BOBBS-MERRILL |
| 7. A FAREWELL TO ARMS * | *Ernest Hemingway* | SCRIBNER'S |
| 8. THE DARK JOURNEY | *Julian Green* | HARPERS |
| 9. BURNING BEAUTY | *Temple Bailey* | PENN |
| 10. RED SILENCE | *Kathleen Norris* | DOUBLEDAY, DORAN |
| 11. HANS FROST * | *Hugh Walpole* | DOUBLEDAY, DORAN |
| 12. A LANTERN IN HER HAND | *Bess Streeter Aldrich* | APPLETON |

## GENERAL

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. HENRY THE EIGHTH | *Francis Hackett* | LIVERIGHT |
| 2. THE ART OF THINKING | *Ernest Dimnet* | SIMON & SCHUSTER |
| 3. A PREFACE TO MORALS | *Walter Lippmann* | MACMILLAN |
| 4. THE TRAGIC ERA | *Claude G. Bowers* | HOUGHTON MIFFLIN |
| 5. THE MANSIONS OF PHILOSOPHY | *Will Durant* | SIMON & SCHUSTER |
| 6. THE CRADLE OF THE DEEP | *Joan Lowell* | SIMON & SCHUSTER |
| 7. STRANGE INTERLUDE | *Eugene O'Neill* | LIVERIGHT |
| 8. ELIZABETH AND ESSEX | *Lytton Strachey* | HARCOURT, BRACE |
| 9. QUEEN ELIZABETH * | *Katharine Anthony* | KNOPF |
| 10. JOURNEY'S END * | *R. C. Sherriff* | BRENTANO |
| 11. GRANDMOTHER BROWN'S HUNDRED YEARS * | *Harriet Connor Brown* | LITTLE, BROWN |
| 12. SALT WATER TAFFY | *Corey Ford* | PUTNAM |

* *This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.*

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# BON VOYAGE

## *Here and There, Mainly in the Americas*

BY ARTHUR BARTLETT MAURICE

WHAT IS the secret of the wide popularity of the travel books of Richard Halliburton? They are entertaining and breezily written; so are many other travel books that enjoy nothing more than a *succès d'estime*. Today the positively dull travel book is the exception. Halliburton has a flair for publicity, a quick eye for the advertising chance; but then other writing travellers are not always exactly shrinking violets. Youth is not the explanation, for youth is conspicuously on the wing nowadays, and no matter what the age may be, to travel adventurously is to renew youth and to find the Eldorado sought by Ponce de Leon. But Halliburton possesses to a superlative degree the happy gift of make-believe. On the shores of the Hellespont he was not merely following in the footsteps of Leander; for the moment in imagination he was Leander himself; on the Plain of Marathon to the point of actual physical fatigue he felt himself to be the storied runner with the unspellable and unpronounceable name.

That spirit, which was the keynote of *The Royal Road to Romance* and *The Glorious Adventure*, is again the driving force of *New Worlds to Conquer* (Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00). Here he is Columbus at San Salvador, Robinson Crusoe at Tobago, Balboa in Colombia, and Captain Dreyfus at Devil's Island. Swimming the Panama Canal from Colon to Panama he is the *S. S. Richard Halliburton*, conforming strictly to tonnage regulations and paying toll charges of 36 cents for his weight of 140 pounds. Warned of the perils of the adventure, he paraphrased Farragut with his slogan "Damn the barracudas! Full speed ahead!"

The greater the absurdity of the situation, the better fitted to the self-dramatization that Halliburton adores. In Buenos Aires he acquired a monkey and a hurdy-gurdy. The three soon found their way to the local Bastille. Released, the travelling circus journeyed about the country shattering the air with the strains of "Valencia" and "The Marseillaise". Later he pictures himself as a new Robinson Crusoe, and in the vein of Daniel Defoe writes: "Ships and dreams and fortune took me off to Spain and Egypt, the Indies and Japan, back again to Italy and Greece, and at length to the New World of the Spanish discoverers. For a year or more I followed Columbus and Cortez, Balboa and Pizarro, up and down Latin America until at length I came to the Devil's Island prison colony in French Guiana, where I spent a month in the company of the unhappy convicts imprisoned there". A sprightly book, Halliburton's best to date.

Two Richard Halliburtons of a sort carry *The Horizon Chasers* (SEARS. $2.50) on its light-hearted way to an orchestral accompaniment which includes the drawing of the long bow. They are the author, Loring Andrews, and his companion in adventure, Gavin Archer, one with his guitar and accordion, the other with his jazz flute that operated and looked just like a bicycle pump and was capable of producing all sounds "from a rusty foghorn to a spring leopard caterwauling through the jungle". It all began in San Francisco. Their proffered services as a ship's orchestra declined, Loring and Archer found a way that led through the Coal Hole, a water-front tavern with a flavor



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of the old Barbary Coast days. Soon they were outward bound as stowaways.

Hawaii, islands of the South Seas as romantic as in the pages of Frederick O'Brien, Australasia, Java, Singapore, the Red Sea and Venice was roughly the itinerary of this journey. According to the narrative they lived stories and listened to stories as strange as any ever experienced by Sinbad the Sailor. (Also on occasion probably quite as apochryphal.) But travellers' tales are travellers' tales, and as Kipling has remarked, truth is a naked lady.

The flavor of a world made familiar to an earlier generation by the tales of George W. Cable and Grace King is to be found in Lyle Saxon's *Old Louisiana* (Century. $5.00), illustrated by E. H. Suydam. This, in the words of the author, is the chronicle of two centuries of Louisiana plantation life, a life which began when Louisiana was a colony of France, continued through the Spanish domination, and emerged in the early nineteenth century as a development peculiarly American. Here are the ghosts of old personages, old days, old fashions, old dances, old songs, old houses; of an eighteenth-century planter, of a young man of fashion in 1850, of the belles of the Côte Joyeux, of Christmases and New Years of long ago. The book abounds in footnotes to history and fiction. For example, the Simon Legree of Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is identified as one Robert McAlpin, a bachelor from New England, and Simon Legree's home as the McAlpin plantation on Red River. McAlpin's body-servant was called "Uncle Tom".

Local history had it that the strange lady from the North who visited McAlpin about 1840 and had been seen talking with the Negroes in the fields, riding on the cotton wagons, and watching the operations of the cotton-gin, was Harriet Beecher. A man in the town of Alexandria produced a picture said to be a portrait of Mrs. Stowe, and which bore the stamp of a photographer of Alexandria. A copy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* autographed by the author and bearing the cryptic question: "Do you recognize this?" was sent to Dr. S. O. Scruggs of Cloutierville. Dr. Scruggs was a neighbor of McAlpin's.

More ghosts of the Old South, these of a remoter past, dance through Paul Wilstach's *Tidewater Virginia* (Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00). Incidentally, this book, like Mr. Halliburton's *New Worlds to Conquer*, is dedicated to David Laurance Chambers. To Mr. Wilstach, Tidewater Virginia is more than a phrase; it is an entity. It is one of those magic names—like the Châteaux of France, the Castles on the Rhine, the Bay of Naples, the Canals of Venice, or the Spanish Main. The reason for the glamour of the name is that Tidewater Virginia is a blend of romance and fact. The three great divisions of the Old Dominion State are Tidewater, the Mountains, and South Side. Tidewater is the region of the four major rivers, the James, the York, the Rappahannock and the Potomac.

A careful, illuminating and human historian, Mr. Wilstach tells the story of Tidewater from the landing of the first white man to the present day. The roll of names in itself is like a trumpet call—Powhatan and Pocahontas, Captain John Smith, Governor Berkeley, the Byrds, the Washingtons (and, by inference at least, the Washingtons' neighbors, a certain Mr. Henry Esmond, his daughter Mrs. Warrington, and her sons George and Harry Warrington), the Custises, the Randolphs, the Harrisons, the Jeffersons, the Madisons, James Monroe, Patrick Henry and Edgar Allan Poe.

The flavor of Thackeray's *The Virginians* is in the story of Evelyn Byrd, who is one of the romantic traditions of the Tidewater country. She was a belle and a beauty, as is shown in her portrait by Sir Godfrey Kneller, which hung on the walls of Brandon, the home of the Byrds; and Mr. Wilstach suggests that the artist must have been as proud of it "as he was of his portrait of

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Beatrix Esmond before whose youthful charm, Thackeray tells us, Madame Bernstein sat and meditated so grimly in her old age".

Evelyn went to England when but eighteen and staggered London society. When she was presented at court the King, George I, struck by her loveliness, is said to have allowed himself the levity of a pun, remarking his pleasure that his colonies could furnish such "beautiful Byrds". But thwarted in a love affair by the paternal ban, Evelyn returned to Tidewater, where "she gradually faded away and, at the age of twenty-seven, died a spinster, of a broken heart".

Edifices, rather than people, are the chief protagonists of Charles Moore's *Washington, Past and Present* (Century. $5.00), which like *Old Louisiana*, is illustrated by E. H. Suydam. Early in the book Mr. Moore writes: "The visitor, be he foreign or American, finds that the surest way to orient himself with the City of Washington is to take his stand on the west terrace of the Capitol. A mile and a quarter away rises the gleaming shaft of the Washington Monument; a mile beyond that he sees the contrasting horizontal lines of the white marble Lincoln Memorial set among the green trees".

What Mr. Moore suggests is what the writer, who may claim some knowledge of Washington, did the day preceding President Hoover's inauguration last March. The view should be one of the most beautiful in the world. It is not. Inspiring it is, yet saddening in its suggestion of what might have been. In the foreground there is the smudge of two tall commercial chimneys. Beyond, the line that should bisect the Monument from the center of the Capitol to the center of the Lincoln Memorial does not do so. L'Enfant, the man who designed Washington, planned a monument in the right place. Those who carried out the work of erecting the great shaft followed the line of least resistance with the easy explanation that they were providing "something just as good".

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# PRONOUNCE THE WAY IT'S SPELLED

*by Janet Rankin Aiken*

So ALL day long that free flag toast'," declaimed my son.

"Tossed, darling, tossed," I protested.

"Well, I'd just as soon say it tossed," he replied, "but if I do say it that way in school the teacher will mark it wrong. She says it toast."

"Let me see the book."

He handed me "Barbara Frietchie" and I found the word, written *tost*, in that peculiar fashion which poets and spelling reformers sometimes affect.

"But t-o-s-t spells tossed, not toast," I persisted. "And a flag couldn't have toast; it doesn't make sense."

"She says it must have toast; it rhymes with host," he pointed out triumphantly; and I had not the heart to counter with a few of Whittier's near-rhymes, such as *scarf* with *staff* in the same poem. "Toast" the flag did, in the minds of one teacher and her forty pupils, and "toast" it will continue to do so far as I am concerned; for my bravery does not extend to the correcting of John's teacher, who is bigger than I am.

But the incident set me thinking about the extension of literacy, the radio, the telephone, pronunciation and a few other such things. And I began to wonder whether we are not in the midst of an orthoepic shift which may affect considerably the English language, especially in the United States. I wondered whether it could not be proved that, since it appears to be impossible to mold our spelling to accord with our pronunciation, we are tending at the moment to mold our pronunciation to accord with our spelling.

First a word about the extension of literacy. Some two centuries ago the literate world of England subscribed enthusiastically for an outstanding literary production, Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad*. For the times the sale was tremendous; it amounted to somewhere near four thousand copies. This is but one indication of the fact that two hundred years ago English was still a spoken, rather than a read and written, language. The great majority of true-born Englishmen did not read a book a decade, unless possibly that book may have been the Bible.

Something less than a century later, Charles Churchill, a popular poet now forgotten, startled his world with a production called *The Rosciad*, a poem insufferably tedious to us now, but with a strong appeal to Churchill's contemporaries, which gave it a record circulation. Altogether some twenty thousand copies of this poem were sold by Churchill or his publishers. England was upon the way toward becoming a reading nation.

Today, in the United States alone, the writer of a popular work of fiction, or of a "popular-scientific" book of history, philosophy, or science, may well expect sales running into the hundreds of thousands. If the work is printed in periodical as well as in book form, and possibly also in the syndicated section of the daily press, its circulation may be counted in millions or even in tens of mil-



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lions. Stated mathematically, it is not too much to say that the possible public available for a printed work in English has been multiplied in number by a thousand in two hundred years.

These facts are well known, but their application to the pronunciation of English has not been considered. As the hitherto unlettered generations painfully or joyously acquire a minimum of literacy, what pronouncing standard shall they use? The teacher and the dictionary are very apt not to be there when one needs them; and one's mother may never have read English at all. So what is there to guide pronunciation? What but the printed page itself—or in other words, the spelling?

Spelling is becoming more and more a despot ruling over pronunciation. And if it were a benevolent or rational despot, this fact might be condoned. But no feature of modern English is more irrational than its spelling. Spelling raiseth up one pronunciation, and casteth down another, with far less reason than the jealous God of the Hebrews had for his actions.

Let us take the two words *sheriff* and *offen* as first examples. Historically considered, *sheriff* should be *shire-reeve*, these being the word-elements compounded in its formation. But our ancestors, unconsciously wise as they were, found *shire-reeve* tedious upon the tongue. They shortened both elements, and made the word *sheriff*, as it is today. At the same time—and this is the important point—the spelling altered. *Shire-reeve* became *sheriff*. Today probably not one in a thousand who use the word connects it with either *shire* or *reeve*.

So *sheriff* is safe for simplicity. But what of *offen*? This word, which was originally *oft* with an *en* ending, early simplified from *oft-en* to *offen*. And so it remained in speech, well into the Age of Reading. Even so late as 1890, Webster's Dictionary gave no pronunciation with a "t". But before this date people had begun to look at the spelling, which still retained the "t" which betrayed *offen's* former connection with *oft*. Heavens, said the spelling-pronouncers, here is a consonant which is being neglected! Henceforth it shall be *off-ten*.

And they have been so far successful that nine out of ten of the *oftens* I hear possess a sounded "t". Once I asked John's teacher the reason for requiring *offten* from her pupils. I showed her the modern dictionaries, in which *offten* either does not exist or is labelled vulgar. It did not disturb her. She replied merely that the spelling was easier to remember if the word was pronounced the way it was spelled.

Take another pair of words, *York* and *Injun*. Many people know that *York*—the Boar's Town—was once spelled and pronounced *Eoforwic*, *eofor* being the Anglo-Saxon for *boar*, and *wic* a common suffix meaning *town*. This mouthful of syllables got mumbled more and more (Shakespeare's *Yorick* shows the semi-final stage) until finally *York* emerged, a neat and compact product. Being simplified in spelling as well as in pronunciation, it has remained *York*.

But not so with *Injun*. This word, with *hijus*, *ojus*, and several others, became simplified in pronunciation but not in spelling. During the eighteenth and well into the nineteenth centuries, the simplified forms were used in the very best circles, literary and social. Dr. Johnson, as well as his rejected patron, Lord Chesterfield, said *ojus*.

But finally the spelling-pronouncers became active. There was no "j" in these words; you had only to look at them to see that. All of them had "d", plain as day. Soon even hardened schoolboys were made to blush for saying *Indian* with a "j", and *odious* and *hideous* replaced the easier forms.

The spelling-pronouncers have got in their dirtiest work on compounds, because it was in compounds, with their diffused accentuation, that phonetic simplifications came about most regularly. Consider *hussy* and *grinstun*. I am not quite sure about the social implications of the fact, but it is a fact that *hussy* is *housewife* shortened almost beyond recogni-

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tion, in spelling as well as in pronunciation. Being altered in spelling, it is unthinkable that *hussy* should change its present pronunciation, and a new compound *housewife* has sprung up to take the place of the degraded remnant of this word.

But *grinstun*, not having the spelling altered to match it, has fallen before its parent *grindstone*. *Weskit* has gone the same path in the United States; perhaps in England, where the forces of oral tradition are stronger, and the printed page is less a tyrant, this word has not yet yielded to *waistcoat*. *Forrid* is toppling in my locality; I hear more and more often in place of it the spelling-pronunciation *forehead*.

Two powerful allies have enlisted upon the side of the pedants. These are the telephone and the radio. *Ashlnd*, *Highlnd*, and words of their kind, must be *Ashlaand*, *Highlaand*, over the telephone; and hence one hears also, nowadays, *Englaand*, and the *Highlaand Fling*. On the telephone it is far safer to pronounce every syllable, every consonant and every vowel. I have even heard *Wed-nes-day* for *Wensdy*, and *Fry-day* and *Sun-day* are becoming prevalent instead of *Fridy* and *Sundy*.

Another ally for the spelling-pronouncers is the current, and recurrent, outcry against slurring in speech. The same pedantry which has abolished *Injun* is busily at work with the good, traditional, accepted *ishoo*, *krish-chun*, and *raitchus*. It would have them become *issue*, *kristian*, and even *raitious*. *Nachur*, we are told, must become *nature*, *creachur* must be *creature*, and soon we may expect to hear that *nashun* should be *nation*!

One wonders if *island* will ever come to be pronounced with the "s" Sam Johnson inserted in *iland*, about the middle of the eighteenth century. Already I have heard these vandal pronunciations: *fatigew* for *fateeg*, *gunwale* for *gunnel*, *forecastle* for *focsle*, and *boatswain* for *bosn*. If these are possible, why not *is-land* for *iland*?

In the United States the spelling-pronouncers have made far more headway than in England, as I have hinted. Your Englishman will not lightly abandon a fashion of pronouncing which his parents and his grandparents before him have used. But over here, we are more likely to conform to a standard. And this has worked to overthrow traditions of easy pronunciation in favor of methods based on the spelling.

When a distinguished advisory committee in England recommended to radio announcers *huzzifry* for—just guess!— *housewifery*, the fact was printed widely in this country as a good joke, illustrating the crotchets and vagaries of our brothers across the seas. I have no doubt that every school teacher who read the item had a little feeling of superiority as one who knew already that of course it is *housewifery* and never *huzzifry*. Yet in fact that advisory committee, in making the decision it did, was upholding the tradition as well as the future well-being of the English language. It was upholding a tradition of simplification which is evidenced in nearly every English word which has been English for over a century. And it was upholding the future progress of English by accepting the shortened, easy form. I myself may not fly in the faces of my neighbors and friends, not to mention John's teacher, by using *huzzifry*; but I shall certainly stick to *highlnd*, *fridy*, *offen*, *forrid*, even *Injun*, at whatever risk of popular disapproval.

As you may know, the word *hickup*, spelled *hiccough*, never had any connection with *cough*, being derived from an earlier English word *hicket*, which imitated in its sound the throat-spasm it names. But when an acquaintance of mine, a scholar at home in the best culture of three nations, once stepped into a druggist's and asked for a hickup remedy, the clerk replied, "Oh, yes, we have a hicoff mixture"; and then, lest the force of the rebuke be lost, "you see, it's hicoff, not hickup".

"Oh," murmured my friend. "How do you know that?"

"It's easy," returned the clerk. "You look at the spelling and pronounce it that way."

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## NOTES ON NEW BOOKS—(*continued*)

THE GIRL FROM GOD'S MERCIE *by William Byron Mowery* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

FRANCES BARTON at the age of four was rescued from an Indian camp by an Anglican missionary. At his death Harl Armstrong, pioneer in the desolate Far North, continued her upbringing, and finally became engaged to her. On the train that is to take her to her wedding she meets the famous entomologist, Stanley Clarke. The two men become fast friends, united rather than estranged by their love for her. Their adventures in the Arctic region are very well told; and though the book ends cheerfully, it is primarily the tragedy of Harl, a fine and fearless man.

SEVEN WOMEN *by William M. John* (SEARS. $2.50)

THE scene of this story is a windswept farmhouse in Colorado. Seven ladies are gathered in the Gibbs's front parlor for their regular Ladies' Aid meeting. The book is an indictment of the intolerant pious woman—seven intolerant pious women so circumscribed by their own little ideas of right and wrong that they cannot extend a compassionate hand to another, in this case the hired girl who is about to become a mother, and is unmarried. The fate of the hired girl brings to the mind of each lady in turn an incident out of her past in which she finds justification for her present unsympathetic attitude toward the unfortunate girl. But the reader sees in each of these incidents the reason for the ladies' hard intolerance.

HANGOVER *by Max Lief* (LIVERIGHT. $2.00)

NED WHIPPET was a Broadway columnist on the *Camera,* one of New York's tabloids. It was a job that led him to meet everyone who was anyone, and a good many who merely thought they were. One of the cub reporters on the *Camera's* staff was Diana Hutton, the daughter of the proprietor, with whom Whippet falls in love. There are the usual ups and downs of affianced life, ubiquitous cocktail parties, and moonlight swimming and, later, marriage. Future historians seeking for light on our present-day manners may refer to *Hangover* in the same way that we turn to Congreve and Wycherley for light on the Restoration.

MISSISSIPPI *by Ben Lucien Burman* (COSMOPOLITAN. $2.00)

MR. BURMAN has written a well-constructed popular novel with pretty much of a machine-made plot concerned with the feud of the bedraggled shantyboaters and steamboaters on Old Father Mississippi. There is plenty of color here, manifest suspense, and a well-contrived climax—an obviously-built but pleasing picture of life on the great river that might be turned into a first-class motion picture. The comments on the jacket of Mr. Burman's book—lavish praise from Edward J. O'Brien, Arthur T. Vance, Rose Wilder Lane and Blanche Colton Williams—suggest to the jaundiced commentator the formation of a Society for the Suppression of Blurbs by Over-Enthusiastic Friends.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN *by G. M. Attenborough* (STOKES. $2.50)

ONE can hardly turn a page of this sweetly erudite story without encountering, if not a reference to some literary light, then a quotation from Lamb, Montaigne or Pepys. These *bons mots* fall from the lips of Samela, violet-eyed "little one", and her friend Mr. Twig, connoisseur extraordinary. Samela is imbued with ideals, the sort of ideals that will not permit her to marry the rich young man until he has given away his wealth. He does, of course, and they live happily ever after.

THE BRUISER *by Edward L. McKenna* (MCBRIDE. $2.50)

MR. MCKENNA'S tale of a prize-fighter in the New York of the Gay 'Nineties is exciting and too well written to be merely sensational. The atmosphere is very convincing but one follows the fortunes of the rather airedale-like hero as a pugilist and a lover with such interest that one is conscious only of "a knockout story".

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DOCTOR FOGG *by Norman Matson* (MACMILLAN, $2.00)

MR. MATSON'S novel is a satire on the universal tendency to vulgarize Science. A famous scientist, Dr. Fogg, discovers a new planet and is able to decipher messages from it, as well as to bring to earth a young woman from that remote star, who transcends time and space to marry him. His amazing accomplishment gains for him publicity and wealth. The president of the United States, in the high mark of the author's satire, says: "This is a very interesting achievement of Science. Venus is a fine planet".

SNOW *by Ruth Pine Furness* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

THE story of Nikolas Paget is that of a morally unstable young man, whose vacillating temperament can bring him nothing but unhappiness. We find him first the charming man-about-town, until he meets Mary of the Madonna face and unsophisticated mind. He rushes into marriage with her only to find after six months that she does not satisfy him. The rest of the book is concerned with his efforts to remain faithful to the letter of his marriage vows.

DUDLEY AND GILDEROY *by Algernon Blackwood* (DUTTON. $2.50)

DO NOT read this if you do not like cats. Dudley, a gray King Parrot, leaves home under the protection of an extremely capable but vulgar cat, Gilderoy. It is only after some riotous adventures that they are captured. And then the parrot, who has felt that he is developing a philosophy, lays an egg and dies of shame and exhaustion. The best thing about the book is its sympathetic and unsentimental treatment of the cat; and that is a rare combination.

THEIR FATHER'S SHADOW *by George C. Foster* (MACAULAY. $2.00)

THIS well-developed novel of a self-made man whose children fail him just misses being first-rate. The characters are convincing but the incidents are forced. However, Mr. Foster seems to know what he is trying to do and the result is well worth reading.

DEWER RIDES *by L. A. G. Strong* (PAPER BOOKS. $.75)

THIS, the third selection published for the subscribers of Paper Books, is a long involved story of the English countryside in the Hardy manner. The novel is crowded with characters and every incident is done with great detail. There is a very tangible beauty about the book that will assure it a longer life than many novels published in a more durable binding.

HOUR UPON THE STAGE *by Ann Pinchot* (DODD, MEAD. $2.50)

SIDE by side here we see the growth of Muskenaw, Michigan, from a crude lumber camp to a thriving center of the automobile industry, and the development of Israel Challanty from a Jewish immigrant from Poland with a pack on his back to a prosperous merchant. This story of a Jewish community, and more particularly of the Challanty family, is rich in character drawing.

FALSE YOUTH *by Lawrence Rising* (LIVERIGHT. $2.50)

THE SOMETIMES silly, sometimes tragic, picture of a middle-aged woman's last flare of passion is sympathetically drawn in Mr. Rising's new novel. Louisa St. Aubyn, American expatriate, is drawn as a woman of remarkable poise and common sense until this treacherous longing for a good looking young Guardsman overcomes her. When the glamour wears off she discovers he is just a common creature not above blackmailing her. The author handles a delicate theme with admirable restraint.

INVITATION TO THE DANCE *by Madge Jenison* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

THIS BOOK puts one in mind of an etching of cathedrals and trees, all wavy lines and blurred effect, and yet, oddly enough, the picture of Aunt Guddah emerges at the end as clear a portrait as though cut in dry point. Aunt Guddah survives two husbands, one a sadist, lives to marry a third, takes a trip to Spain she had thought on for well-nigh forty years, and becomes something of a tradition in the

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family—a well-loved tradition. An encouraging story of how a woman lived her life fully, beginning at a time when most people thought that life had long since passed her by.

CALF LOVE *by Vernon Bartlett* (LIPPINCOTT. $2.50)

A SENSITIVE English boy, a paying guest in a middle-class pre-war German family, is the victim of calf love. His affections center first on the younger and coquettish daughter, but later are transferred to her older sister. An impassioned fiancé and an inhibited maiden aunt circumvent his desires. The story is simply told, with restraint and a humorous understanding of first love and the tragic proportions it assumes for the youthful suppliant.

SAILORS OF FORTUNE *by William McFee* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

MR. MCFEE'S book, a collection of short stories, is distinguished by an old-fashioned suavity and a slightly Victorian romanticism. He writes with wisdom and acuteness of those whose lives are loyal to ships. The book is a gallery of notable portraits, etched in with a brilliant sense of human values. They are unassuming stories, but they leave an impress on the memory.

A GREAT LOVE *by Alexandra Kollontay* (VANGUARD. $2.50)

THE THREE stories in this volume all have to do with love and the Russian Revolution. It is interesting to note how the lives of the women concerned are dominated by and bound up in the Cause, and how they tend to subject their individual problems to the larger issue. Madame Kollontay writes with authority, for she has been a prominent figure of the Revolution for many years.

THE PEOPLE OF THIS TOWN *by Ethel Hueston* (BOBBS-MERRILL. $2.00)

MRS. HUESTON, with a long line of cheerful problem novels to her credit, now deals decisively with a minister's modern independent wife beset by the nagging tongues of the town. The book, though light, is very plausible.

ELVA *by Durward Grinstead* (COVICI, FRIEDE. $2.50)

FROM a wealth of historical material Mr. Grinstead, who is in the United States Diplomatic Service, has constructed his first novel. Against the bleak and unnatural life of Salem village in the days of witchcraft, he depicts the emotional struggle of Elva, whose heritage was a conflict between Puritanism and Rabelaisianism. She it is who holds the center of interest, although at times the swirling flames of a mounting superstition hide her from view. In the end she is consumed by the flames which she makes her own.

FAREWELL TO PARADISE *by Frank Thiess* (KNOPF. $2.00)

THIS CHARMING book, a prelude to the author's more ambitious tetralogy on modern youth in Germany, is a brief and sympathetic account of adolescent friendship and love. It has a spring-like pastoral quality and deftly avoids the sentimental. The translation is excellent.

## *Detective and Mystery*

THE CRIMSON CIRCLE *by Edgar Wallace* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

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THE GREATEST ADVENTURE *by John Taine* (DUTTON. $2.50)

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THE author of several successful mystery plays stumbles on a queer death while on an Armistice Day holiday with his secretary and his wartime buddy. Malachi Trent of Cairnstone House on the Baltimore Pike is found on the floor of his library, having apparently met his death as the result of an accident. What looks to be obvious at first glance, turns out to be murder with more to come. Jerningham, the playwright, sets his theoretical mind to work and reconstructs the outstanding events immediately prior to Trent's death. Within twenty-four hours the murder of Trent is avenged and the sinister shadow that hung over Cairnstone is lifted.

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SHUDDERS *by Cynthia Asquith* (SCRIBNER'S. $2.00)

IT WILL be recalled that Miss Asquith has several ghost stories to her credit and in this book, consisting of fifteen tales of the supernatural, she is ably supported by Walter de la Mare, E. F. Benson, Hugh Walpole, Arthur Machen, W. Somerset Maugham and other distinguished English writers.

THE AFFAIR AT THE CHATEAU *by Mrs. Baillie Reynolds* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.00)

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# THE BOOK MART

To judge by the present condition of the book auction markets in New York and London, the trouble this season has been not so much the finding of buyers of rare books as finding rare books to sell. After the stock market slump of last fall there were all sorts of dire predictions of a slump in prices of rare books, but these have not yet been fulfilled. In this country there have been no sales that could be called great, and in the most important of the London sales before the holidays prices were surprisingly high. While it is true that many book buyers got "caught short" in the stock market, there seem to be a good many buyers of rare books who either did not get into the speculative maelstrom or who were so strongly anchored that they were not affected by the strong current of selling. The London *Times*, in commenting on the situation, expressed the belief that the fall of stocks either had or will have an adverse effect upon rare books and works of art. Yet it says that in spite of this and although two or three important collectors held aloof, "the prices realized at the Sotheby sale were remarkable". One explanation is that many buyers thought, as they did after the World War, that Europe would dump its literary treasures on this country and that this would be a good time to buy, with the result, as before, that prices continued to go higher. Undoubtedly the stock market situation will have an effect of checking purchases, and it also will prevent considerable material from coming into the open market. But the dealers stand ready to take advantage of this situation, and a good deal of the choicest of material is coming to this country without ever reaching the auction market.

Not long ago Dulau & Company of London catalogued a collection of Oscar Wilde letters which is probably the most remarkable in existence. The collection included letters written by Wilde from Reading Gaol to Robert Ross, with unpublished letters, poems and plays formerly in the possession of Robert Ross, C. S. Millard and the younger son of Oscar Wilde. Sixty-two letters written to Ross between the date of Wilde's release from prison and his death have never been published. The catalogue of 140 pages described these items minutely, omitting names and offering them separately. Now it appears that the whole collection was bought by Gabriel Wells, the New York dealer, and probably will pass into the hands of an American collector at a price which makes dividend-paying stocks look cheap. It is worthy of note that Mr. Wells holds the record for importing into America more copies of the First Folio of Shakespeare than any other dealer. In the year 1928 he acquired six copies of the First Folio. It may be some consolation to English bibliophiles to know that the Lee-Perkins copy bought by Mr. Wells was resold by him last year to a prominent English house for a European collector, and the George C. Thomas copy and another untraced one have likewise gone back to England.

So far as New York auction sales are concerned the outlook for the remainder of the 1929-30 season is not particularly bright. One noticeable feature thus far has been the holding of sales by small auction houses or by book departments of large auction houses through which considerable of the medium priced literary material has reached the hands of collectors and dealers. Apparently these smaller houses have done well with their initial sales, and while there is no great money in such sales for anybody concerned, there may be a living profit where the overhead is not too large. At any rate they serve a use-



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# THE BOOK MART

ful purpose in providing an outlet for a class of material for which there is always a demand at a moderate price.

The new magazine for sophisticated book collectors, *The Colophon*, which makes its appearance this month, starts off with every prospect of meeting a long-felt want. This new quarterly is published for the reader who collects books and knows why, so that its appeal is not elementary or as a vehicle of collecting propaganda. The number of copies will be limited to 2,000, it is announced, "solely because the mechanical requirements will be such that a larger printing could not have the high quality of craftsmanship which the editors wish the publication to attain". With the rapid increase of book collectors in the United States it ought not to be difficult to find two thousand people who want such a magazine, and the limitation in itself is likely to create an increased demand.

The third publication of The Cygnet Press is announced as *Oxford Nearly Visited. A Fantasy*, by David McCord, a poem which attracted some attention when it was originally printed by Franklin P. Adams in his "Conning Tower" in the New York *World*. It expresses the feelings of an American in England who came very near going to Oxford and is quite in the style of "The Scholar Gypsy". The Cygnet Press, as may not be generally known, is George Parker Winship and Philip Hofer of Harvard, who print things for their own pleasure, and who do it remarkably well. The present issue is printed at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, in a quarto booklet in Fell type. There are two eighteenth-century Oxford engravings and initial letters, one of which, showing the

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Vrest Orton's definitive bibliography of the writings of Theodore Dreiser has been published by The Chocorua Press of New York. Dreiser has been in the public eye more than ever since a Cambridge, Massachusetts, dealer was sentenced to jail for selling a copy of *An American Tragedy*, but Orton's bibliography mentions another Dreiser book which it is unlawful to even own, in this country. This is the Heinemann edition of *Sister Carrie*. Not that there is anything wrong with Sister Carrie's morals, but the book was brought out by Heinemann in his Dollar Series, with a reproduction of a dollar bill on the cover, and a Federal statute prohibits one from having any reproduction of United States money. This edition, by the way, is as rare as the first, but if any one gets a copy he will have to obtain it from some bootleg bookseller.

Gabriel Wells has recently come into enthusiastic possession of some Washington Irving material. Among this is a group of letters to our author-Ambassador from men of prominence in the days of bell-shaped beaver hats, satin stocks, and shining coat-tail buttons. One letter to Irving from Edgar Allan Poe, written from Philadelphia, June 21st, 1841, is of the greatest literary interest, and describes his hope of having Irving join him and George R. Graham, a wealthy Philadelphia lawyer, in establishing a monthly magazine that would carry "contributions from the most distinguished pens (of America) exclusively". What Poe wanted from Irving was a promise to write a "paper" each month for the new periodical and to pledge himself not to contribute to any other magazine.



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## *Reprints and Anthologies*

*Miscellaneous*

The Literature of America, An Anthology of Prose and Verse *edited by Arthur Hobson Quinn, Albert Croll Baugh, and Will David Howe* (Scribner's. Two vols. $3.50 each). Grouped by periods and types; authentic historical introductions, biographical notes, index, extended reading lists; thin paper, handy.

The Diary of Montaigne's Journey to Italy in 1580 and 1581 *translated by E. J. Trechmann* (Harcourt, Brace. $3.50). Intellectually exciting days of a born traveller.

Guide to Reference Books *by Isadore Gilbert Mudge* (American Library Association. $4.00). Fifth edition. The standard text book for library students; useful to all research workers.

Amiel's Journal *translated by Mrs. Humphrey Ward* (Brentano. $3.50). Travels in the solitary and unmarked paths of the soul; biographical introduction; index.

A Journey to the Land of Eden and Other Papers *by William Byrd* (Vanguard. $2.50). A surveying expedition and visits to mines in colonial Virginia by the founder of Richmond; very entertaining.

*Biography*

Robert Louis Stevenson, A Critical Biography *by John A. Steuart* (Little, Brown. $4.00). Two volumes; illustrated; index; first published in 1924.

John Brown, A Biography 1800-1859 *by Oswald Garrison Villard* (Doubleday, Doran. $4.00). Notes; bibliography; index; illustrations; first published 1910.


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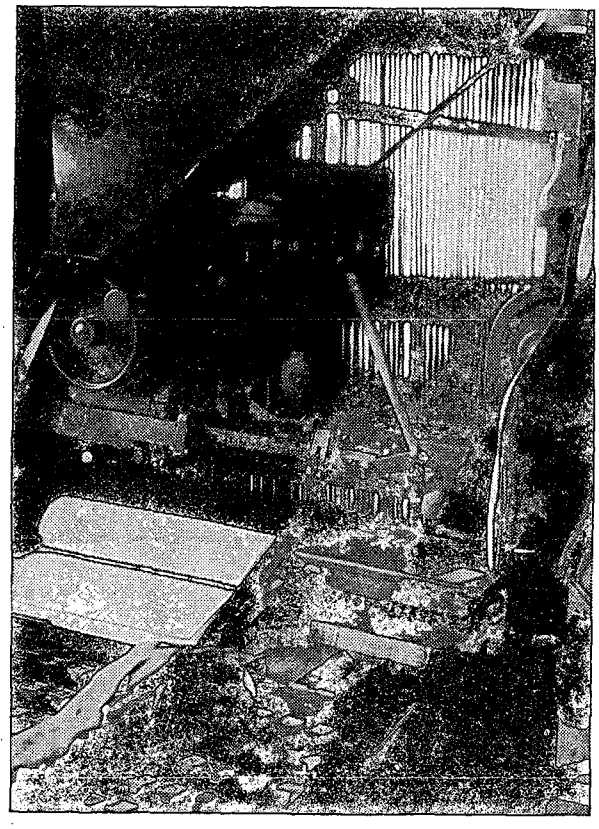

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